The Green Mysteries

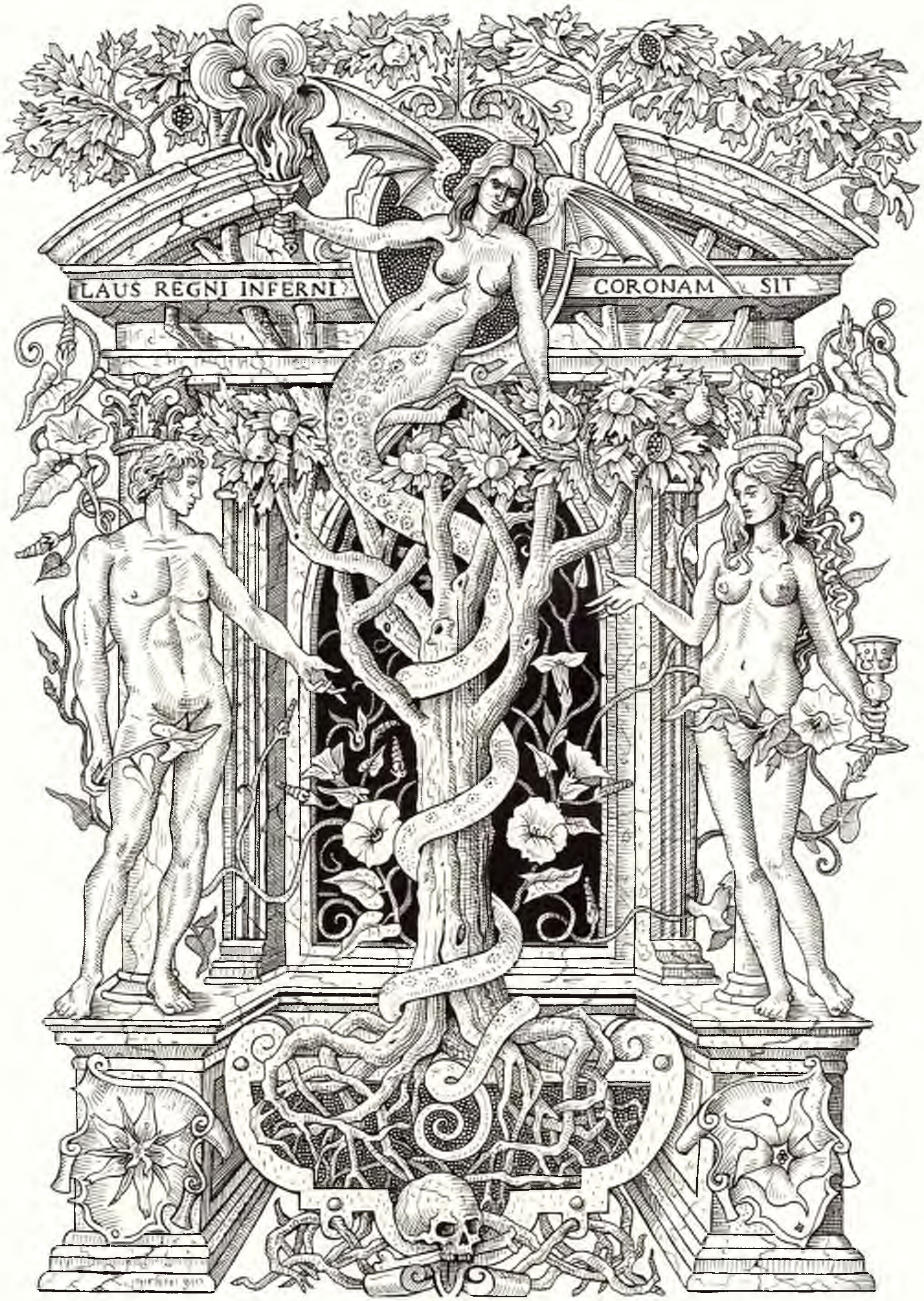
ARCANA VIRIDIA

An Occult Herbarium

Daniel A. Schulke

IMAGES BY BENJAMIN A. VIERLING

THE GREEN MYSTERIES


LAUS REGNI INFERNI
CORONAM SIT

The Green Mysteries

Arcana Viridia

A GRANARY OF THE FAUNS,
BEING AN OCCULT HERBARIUM

Daniel A. Schulke

Images by
Benjamin A. Vierling

Three Hands Press
2022

Encomium of the Masters

IT WAS THE Oak, first among masters, that awakened me to the mysteries of the body, and showed me the hidden habitations of spirit. Roaring in the Tonkawa wind, its shade revealed the cartography of True Will. Its seed nourished me when cities were a distant memory; its branches blessed the eternal union of the Beloved. Its wood provided the timbers of my home—and the rough-hewn gods of my worship. Opening as a door unto Self, it granted the way forward.

To the virgin ground of my spirit, the Farmer demonstrated the marriage of flesh to the land, its vast riches and poverties. He bid me never forget, and always honor, the old goddesses and gods of agriculture.

From the Calamus root I learned the true dimensions of medicine, the ghost-roads of reverie and their proper walking—and the irrelevance of those conquered by aversion.

From the Poisoner learned I restraint, cunning and just rulership: Eupator Dionysius stood with me over the mortar as I ground honey with venom.

Beneath the branches of the great Sequoia I was admitted to the libraries of eternity, books of green sufficient to read across a thousand lifetimes. Its wooden vault served as the good barque of my dreaming.

The Midwife taught that Eden first belonged to Woman, who in turn passed its powers to Man. She plucked the leaves of the Forbidden Tree and demonstrated their power to me.

In keeping with its elder truths, Tobacco taught the nature of confrontation and destruction, and the perennial commerce between war and agriculture.

The Simpler taught me the art of reckoning signs and numbers, inscribed by Nature across leaf, flower and root...and how to prepare a table for friends and enemies.

The Moon-plant taught prophecy, and the prices paid for violating its taboo; the Sun-plant first taught humility, and then liberated my eyes from mundane vision.

In the laboratory of the Alchemist I learned to test and try all things by proofs, but to know such trials as the pure adoration of Dame Nature.

The Thimbleberry taught renewal and eternal sustenance, and the presence of watching angels on the path of the world-wanderer.

The Poet taught that speaking is the lesser portion of language, and that the heart, as manifest through the body entire, is the hidden tongue of the greenwood.

Belladonna taught horror and beauty, and shattered the false mirror of identity; her veil was lowered to arouse, and lifted to destroy.

The Nurse, she true-sworn unto Apollo Physician, taught compassion and the art of pharmacy, and love of the body.

The Rose taught power, cipher and symbol, and the great treasury of the Ritual Vault.

It was my own body incarnate which offered up the summation of the greater wisdoms of before, and was granted audience with Nature and her emissaries.

Thus stand those in the Grove of the Named,
whose power sanctified the trials before,
whose truth was borne by action,
and whose flowering brought forth this,
the Mystery in the Green.

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THE GREEN MYSTERIES
Arcana Viridia: A Granary of the Fauns

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INTRODUCTION

ALONE, yet ever in the company of spirits, we wander the green maze of creation. As flesh, blood, bone and breath, we are ever animal; yet even the most self-absorbed and isolate human cannot escape the hedges which green the perimeter of awareness, the vital constructs of garden, agricultural plot, and wilderness, nor avoid the chain of connectivity with plants through food, respiration, and other necessities of incarnation.

Whether acknowledged or not, the dominion of plants is very much a master of the human realm and has been responsible in great measure for its ongoing success. The mystery of the grain and its child bread, which forever transformed the relationship between mankind and Nature, is but one powerful example. By another measure we consider the vast fern forests of elder Earth, once the verdant lifeblood of the Carboniferous, whose generations of compressed bodies now form the blackest heart of the underworld: fossil hydrocarbons now mined by *Homo sapiens* for crude energy sources.

Plants provide medicine, food, and fiber: three great essentials for human perpetuity. They offer up the complexities of scent as the basis of perfumes or are extracted into preparations for cleansing the body. Brought to the engorged heights of sexual arousal, plants offer up their flowers, perennial symbols of love and attraction, to provide many-colored bouquets for human courtship and the wedding feast, and adorn the caskets of the dead as the funeral garland.

An herb may yield its genetic and chemical secrets to scientific inquiry, furthering our current understanding of taxonomy and the great dendritic mélange recognized as life. Once widely revered as gods, trees were later sacrificed to provide the great wooden beams of the temples of religion, and the paper for its sacred sciptures. As the diverse retinue of the horticulturist, plants populate the pleasure-gardens of nobility and peasant alike, each a *hortus conclusus* planted and tended in the microcosmic image of the first paradises. All of these plant uses are well known and reckoned as virtues: lawful fruits of trees whereof we are permitted to eat.

Beyond these common human requirements are the lesser-known religious, spiritual and magical plant powers which stand in shadow, subtle in nature but long revered. Their potencies may inspire, arouse, stupefy, kill or maim. They may awaken the spirit to ecstasy or lend their unique strengths to prayer and divine worship. Some among their number may catalyze prophecy, madness, or as is the case with the most enigmatic sages, both states simultaneously. Some plants are the ancient and hoary habitations of gods and spirits, others, such as the visionary herbs, provide *ecstasis*: the temporal liberation of the soul from the dense cladding of its materialist molding.

Such potencies and attributions have been routinely rejected or ridiculed by industrial science (an unacknowledged but pervasive crypto-religion of our present era) as well as the predominant secular morality: they were ignored, condemned or consigned to the accursed status of 'outlaw'. Yet these shadow characteristics, bearing concentrated spirit-intelligences, possess equal virtue to those aspects more readily accepted and exploited. When such potent bodies of plant knowledge are thus marginalized, they survive as occult lore and the ritual practices of folk magic, remembered and practiced by a few. These strata of plant knowledge we call *The Green Mysteries*, the subject of our contmeplation.

◆

The present volume was begun in early 1991, when I was receiving formal training in horticulture and herbal medicine. Its first pages were composed in woodlands and canyons, when I was spending a great deal of time alone in the North American wilderness in California, the Pacific Northwest, as well as Nevada, Idaho, and Montana. During this same period, I was also pursuing studies in ethnobotany, agriculture, spagyric alchemy and permaculture. As part of this immersion in the plant world I was exposed to a great deal of theoretical and practical knowledge, but also a third emanation: the spiritual impress of the plant world itself, independent of human teachers.

A unique grammar emerged, encompassing botany, art, magic and spiritual commerce; from this rubric, patterns of esoteric inquiry arose, like aventitious roots. Knowledge presented itself through Nature herself and the arena of the senses, through peregrination of wild places, mindful experimentation, and collaboration with diverse practitioners. The approach sought the complex magical essences of individual plants, not only in the passages of ancient texts, but also amid the wild places, and among people—as living practice, belief and family traditions. *The Green Mysteries*, originally begun as a private notebook for my own use, eventually grew into this work, alternately referred to as *A Granary of the Fauns*.

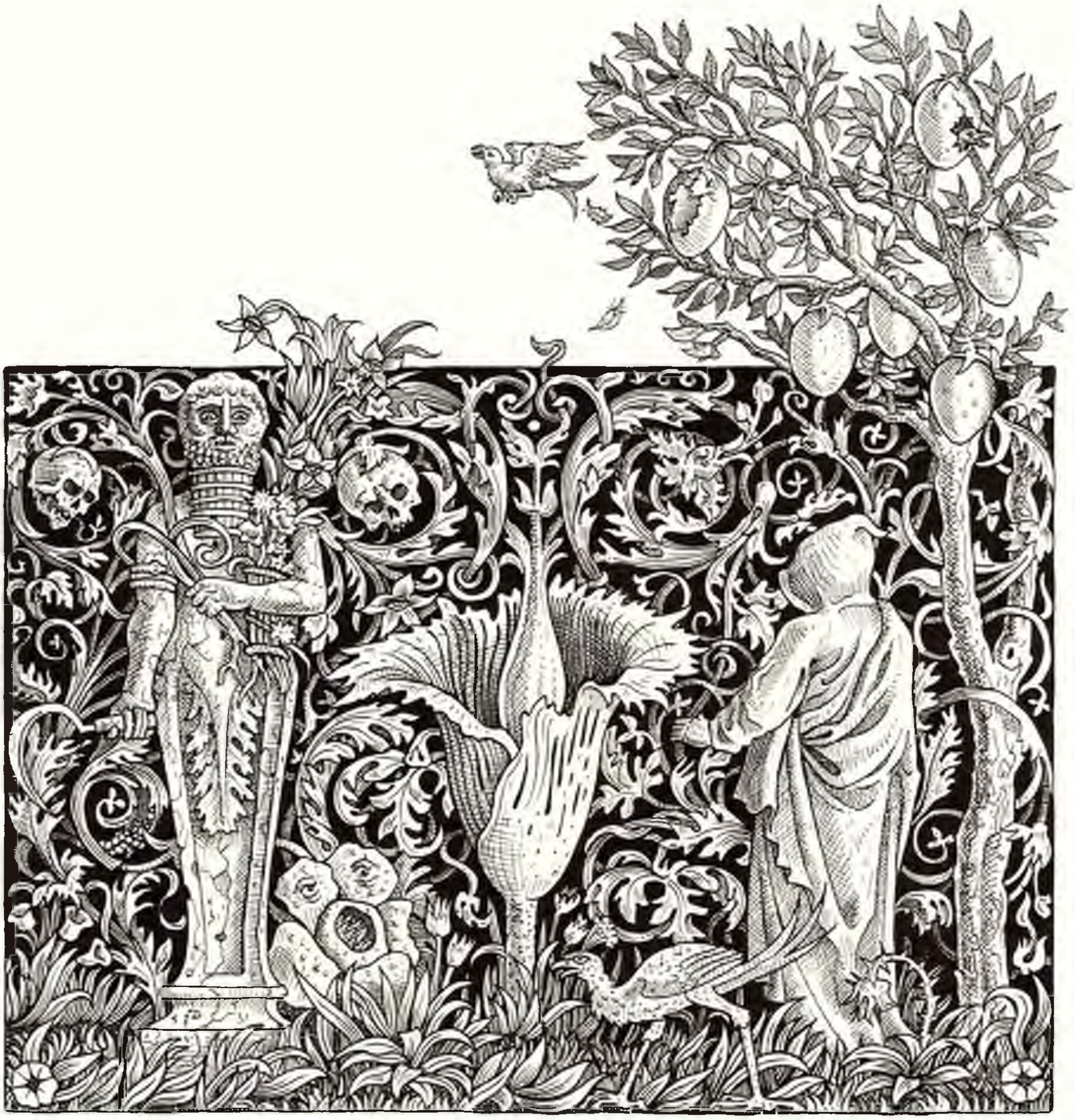
In conceiving the dimensions of this book, I drew inspiration from the great herbals of Europe; a genre characterized by fascination, spiritual wonder, and botanical viscerality. In doing so, it was necessary to bring forth an entirely new corpus of artwork. The over 300 unique images contained herein, executed by the hand of artist Benjamin A. Vierling, are intended as embodiments of plant powers, each a botanical cipher reverberated from its living source through the hand and eye of the artist. In formulating the visual arcana of these plant ciphers, Benjamin was the perfect collaborator, and brought both vitality and nuance to the images.

The plants explored in this work will, for the most part, be familiar to the modern American and British student of herbalism: resins from the Middle East and North Africa; European therapeutics and poisons; power-plants and folk medicines of the Americas; spices and stimulants from India, Indonesia and the Caribbean. In addition to these, inclusion is given to certain botanicals neglected in continental occult sources, including representatives of the sacred plant corpora of China, Australia, Africa, and Polynesia. Each, in their own manner, has provided their own Eden as a living bequest to the practitioner.

This book concentrates primarily on the spiritual and magical uses of plants, as well as their esoteric and folkloric properties. Some medicinal attributions have also been included for reference, especially where the means of their healing usage is ceremonial, or where their therapeutics hint at deeper spiritual principles.

In my approach I have been content with neither collation nor synthesis: knowledge remains abstracted unless given life by practice, so I have included some of my own observations and formulae, arising from living among and working with the plants themselves. In addition to those herbs which mankind has generally lauded as beneficial, I have also endeavored to include many that are considered evil, pestilential, and wretched, in order to honor their power and mystery.

For a few plants, I have provided a table of correspondence, noting allied or sympathetic concepts; other entries are shorter, and do not include these. These correspondences, where given, are mostly my own. Some of these tables of correspondence include a visual *Emblem* of my own devising, intended as a key to memory for contemplation of a plant's powers. Where planetary correspondences are concerned, hearkening to the old Doctrine of Signatures and astrological herbalism, many are in alignment with those of early modern Natural Magic, which,



as a discipline, very much concerned itself with esoteric plant properties.

Selected botanical entries herein also include a unique *Spirit-Retinue*. Here, a plant's powers appear as a group of personified virtues, attributes, characteristics or concepts which operate singly, or together in various combinations. The Spirit-Retinues are thus conceived as a group of distinct but allied sentiences which emanate from, and attend upon, the plant; an alliance of sentient power-emanations which may be considered individually or as a group. Although the spirit-attributions comprising these Spirit Retinues are wholly my own, my inspiration for this specific esoteric approach was drawn from the Renaissance philosopher Giordano Bruno, who devised many complex systems for classifying occult powers, and was a master of the *Ars Memoria*—the Art of Memory. In particular, his 1591 work *On the Composition of Images, Signs and Ideas*, specifically the sections regarding the Attendants of the Planets, was essential inspiration for my conception of botanical virtues as a retinue of spirits.

In bringing this book to light, it is my hope that, beyond serving as a reference for the esoteric herbalist, it also conveys an impression of the numinous, beyond mere words and images, and so kindles within the reader an inspired alignment with the spirit-roads of the plant realm.

THE OPENING OF THE GRANARY

AMID THE ASHES of the world stood a copse of trees, enclosed about with Cypress and Oak: the grove of the annihilation of gods, lovers, friends and foes. Before the oldest of them I stood, warded by moss and fern, in the place of final refuge. At the base of this tree I raised a table of offering, stone upon stone, and upon it laid the substance of my flesh, blood and bone. And in the seething midst of the greenwood's shade and light, I made my prayer:

Take me to the first Tree of elder Earth,
with the fearsome well at its root.

Show me the face of First Woman,
when she ate of the Devil's fruit.

Show me that most noble Tree
felled to fashion the apalling Christus-Cross,
whilst it yet lived and thrived, and shed its seed.

Show me the face of the leaf-masked Vörðr,
him who ever walks beside me.

Show me the dark and hellish tinctures of Thessalia,
and the many splendorous herbs of the Labor of Khem.

Show me the conquering talisman Moly,
and those hideous roots with whom it did combat.

Pray show me the way lit by the green lamp,
the secret teachings of herbs and trees.

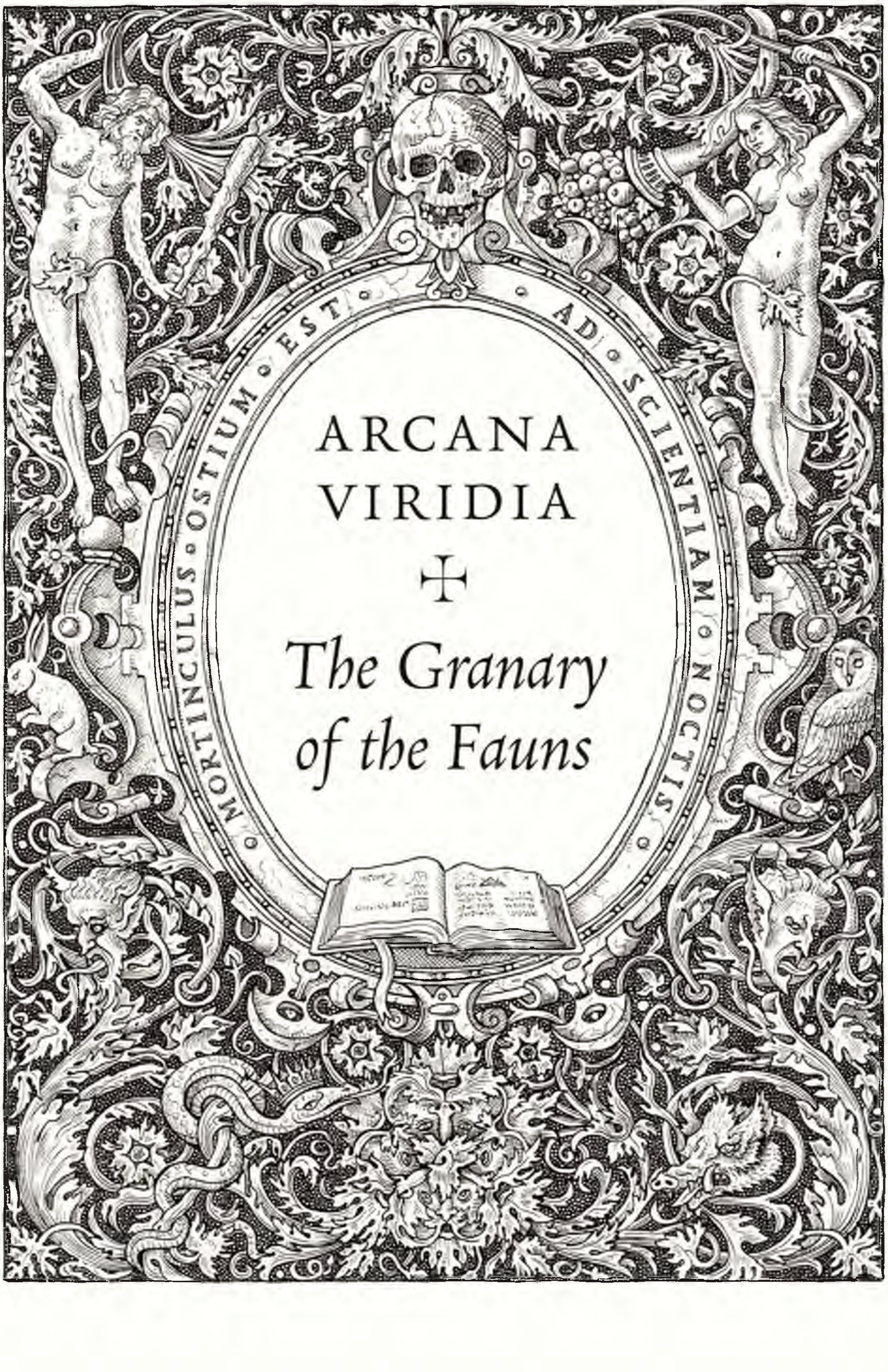
In that place the wood rippled like wind on water, becoming as flesh: it assumed the contours of a vine, then a snake, then the emergent form of a Woman, and then Man. And from the bark of the Oak he stepped forth as a shadowy thing, partly enfleshed: god, man, beast and tree as one, a vegetal harbinger of the world's own mantle.

And conjured there before him was a great stone *granarium*, that place for gathering in the harvest, its surface graven with the image of every nymph, her name and power. He gestured, and from this great casket poured forth all manner of fruits and flowers, and leaves inscribed with golden letters, the ecstasy of perfume, and the threat of strangling, puncture, thorns, and poisons resplendent.

'This Holy Casket is opened', spoke the harvest-keeper, *'For the verdant illumination of Woman and Man.'*

ARCANA VIRIDIA

The Granary of the Fauns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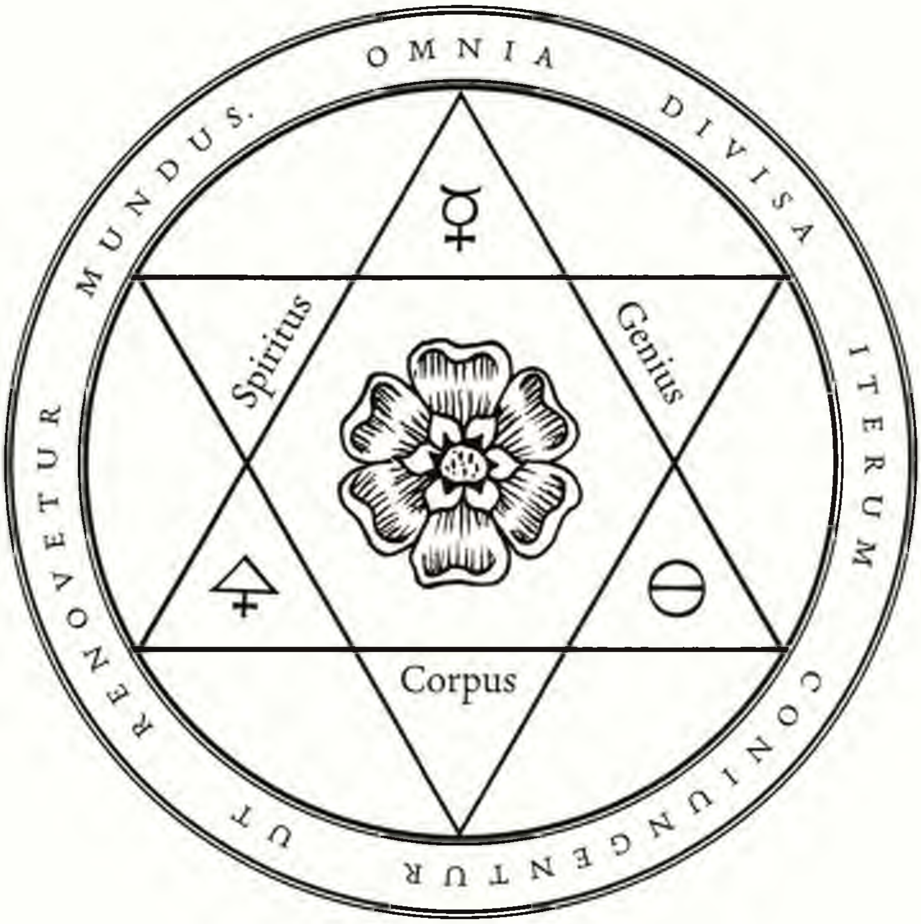


Concerning Resonance, and the Occult Powers of Plants

PLANT power encompasses multiple levels of being, from its biotic function within its ecological community to its chemical properties, to its reproductive cycle, to the evolutionary library of its specific genome. In addition to these is the *Arcana Viridia* or Green Mysteries: the garden of occult principles, those energies hidden to the mundane eye but accessed through spell, charm and magical operation, or preserved in folk custom or folk magical practices. This cortege of enigmatic potencies comprises a portion of a plant's spiritual essence, and its potentials to merge and collaborate with those of human flesh.

Where they have interfaced with human religion and rite, herbs possess additional attributions of power. A single plant, for example, may be used in ritual to call down celestial forces into an earthen matrix, but may also be used as a charm to attract a paramour. Roots which enjoy repute as destroyers of evil spirits can also be found in rituals to summon the Devil and his infernal ministers. Such complexes of occult potency which constellate about a plant are part of its spirit-retinue, and its unique ætheric signature.

It is often the case that tessellations of magical power within a single plant provide clues to its extrapolated sorcerous potentials. For example, an herb valued as a hunting-charm, but also possessing the power to bring wealth, suggests its magical use to obtain one's ideal employment. Any plant possessing the three powers of Allure, Commerce, and a love-charm, would naturally serve within the realm of prostitution. The powers of Invisibility, Protection, and Warfare suggests usage in the arenas of espionage, subterfuge and surveillance.

The occult powers investigated herein include some of the most common ones attributed to plants and sought throughout the ages. These are drawn from folklore and magical tradition, but more importantly they are expressed with especial vigor in the magical operations in which they are used. Additionally, lesser-known powers are described for certain plants within the text. Where past lexica of occult herbalism presented unsatisfactory descriptions of such powers, I have re-examined them here, and either refined them for clarity, expanded them, or dispensed with them entirely.

As magical operations are geared toward highly specific purposes, they require a specialized terminology, describing the powers sought by the magician, sorcerer, healer, or witch. Here follows a brief, though by no means comprehensive, list of plant powers, as used within this book.

AFFLICTION: A malevolent magical force which brings disease, discomfort, misfortune of the body, or malady to crops of livestock. Although this form of magic is 'unlawful' and nearly universally condemned, magical operations of virulence nevertheless survive into the modern era. Some of these rites associate certain plants with their ability to blight or inflict illness, or they are otherwise aligned with disease-causing spirits. Plants with a toxic, irritating nature, such as Poison Sumac (*Toxicodendron vernix*) and specifically their morphological defenses, are naturally aligned with this power. Similarly, specialized punitive plant parts such as spines, thorns, and stinging trichomes are allied to this principle. In terms of its correspondence with planetary resonances through the Doctrine of Signatures, the power of affliction is aligned with the natures of both Saturn and Mars, singularly and in conjunction.

ALLURE: The power of physical attraction, or as is sometimes used to describe the maledictive sorcery of witchcraft, 'the glamour': an enchantment or usurpation of the sexual body and will, by way of projected appearance and atmosphere. A common utilization of this occult principle is in magnetizing persons for the purpose for carnal pleasure, though it need not be limited to this intent. As a magical dimension of plants, this emanation properly belongs to Venus, both as a planet and a deific form, specifically in her aspects as enticer, and arouser of the generative corporeal forces.

Though of undifferentiated morality, the power of Allure is most often used in folk magic—as well as so-called 'high magic'—to coerce or seduce. In some cultures, this power is considered a type of fascination, resonant with the so-called Evil Eye. The natural portion of herbs exhibiting these magical properties may be used in such preparations as aphrodisiacs intended for consumption, but they may also be used in spells, cosmetics formulae, or oblative preparations for familiar spirits or gods, such as incense. Plants in this category possess spirits of a sexual nature and draw upon the waters of the sorcerer's sexual well, creating an externalized form serving as an invitation or a lure.

As used in theurgic rites, or other magical operations where summoning the presence of the entity is intended, the power of Allure lies in presenting the sum total of the practitioner as the offering. As such, a plant radiating this power may serve functions of preparing the body in its entirety as a worthy offering or habitation of spiritual powers. Similarly, it may be usefully aligned to rites of sexual magic.

Morphologically, the plant portion naturally aligned with this magical power is the flower, and more specifically, its scent, pollen and nectar. Its appearance, as a tessellation of color and sacred geometry, is equally important. As the flower is the sexual organ of the plant, and is manifest for its procreation, this function is axiomatic.

ATAVISTIC SUMMONING: *Atavism*—a pre-incarnate existence latent within one's present being, a 'relict self'. For the practitioner of magic, atavistic complexes may plumb the realms of bestial, plant, mineral, or elemental forces—all states of previous existence. Such entities and realms of experience lie dormant as corporeal strata and appear, or resurge, through intensities brought on by extreme trauma, ecstasy, dream, or are provoked deliberately in a sorcerous act of incubated nostalgia. Atavisms are reservoirs of information and power; certain plants possess virtues which catalyze or unleash these intelligences, and are appropriate for allied forms of magic. Many, such as Henbane (*Hyoscyamus* spp.), are toxic, and potentially lethal.

BENEFICENCE: The power of aid, assistance, blessing or betterment. Within the present text, *Beneficence* replaces the more common attribution of 'good luck' or 'favour'.

BINDING: Control of spirits. The classic and best-known magical art of binding lies in the restraint of 'demons': powerful energies or spirits regarded as noxious. A classic example of Binding is the operation of the witch-bottle, in which nails, tacks, bent pins, broken glass, and other hostile objects are sealed in a vessel with a portion of an offending person's essence, such as hair, and buried. In folk sorcery as well as ceremonial magic, certain herbs are esteemed for arresting or immobilizing malodorous essence. Plant parts containing tannins, such as wood and roots, are especially adept at this action, as their action is constricting and fixative. Within the context of sorcery and ceremony, binding may also refer to the tasking of spirits, i.e., binding them to a specific charge.

CHILDBIRTH: Certain plants, according to their attendant magical traditions, are recognized as allies to the birthing mother, her child, and, to a lesser extent, the midwife or immediate family. Many of these herbs are medical or biochemical in action, acting upon the body; others operate purely as an allied spirit, and are magical in essence.

COERCION: The power to compel and control a person, power, or entity. This power is often attributed to plants used for exorcism or love-charms; such are also valued for use in gambling and attaining success in matters of law.

COMMERCE: Promoting the flow of money and other forms of material success, specifically as regards business. Though this power is found in nearly all strata of plant magic, it is especially well represented in the North American magical traditions of Hoodoo.

CONDUCTION: Folklore and magical tradition recounts that some woods, such as that of Ash and Hazel, possess a preternatural ability to channel or conduct power. These woods are especially prized for use as wands, staves, and other magical instruments. Often, this aspect of conductivity will work both ways, in terms of sending and receiving power. Magical traditions concerning Hazel rods, for example, indicate their valued use in rhabdomancy (divination by dowsing), where they are said to function as a conductor, becoming receptive to subterranean water, minerals, or buried treasure.

CONSECRATION: Also called 'hallowing', consecration is a power characterized by the *ritual imprintation of magical intent* upon a person, object or place. Such intent is spoken, sung, impressed through mental projection or prayers, encrypted in chants or carved runes, or by other magical means. Plant parts most often used for consecration are essential oil, leaves, flowers or resin, though all portions are appropriate, based upon the context of the magical operation. Consecration plants are often aromatic, with 'green' and camphoraceous aromatics such as Sage, Hyssop, or Cedar; they may also be balsamic such as Frankincense and Benzoin. These herbs are often united with the cleansing properties of water, as in a prepared wash or bath, or with a perfumed oil.

CURSE LIFTING: That power which aids in dissolution and dispersion of *maleficia*, or the projected malevolent or baneful magical force. This power is known in some parts of England and Wales as *unbewitching*.

CURSING: Malevolent or sinister magic for inflicting harm. As magic strictly intended to cause harm, it is the stereotypal 'black magic' which many modern magical practitioners deny, but which nevertheless can be found as a solidified and living presence in nearly all magical traditions and religions, including Judaism, Christianity and Islam. Plants possessing the powers of cursing are often poisonous, such as Mandrake (*Mandragora* spp.), or have thorns or spines, such as *Opuntia* spp. Others may be, according to folk tradition, habitations for chaotic entities such as *jinn*. In further consideration, deliberately rotted or diseased plant portions, in general, are sometimes used for occult operations of malediction.

DECEPTION: That power which may be used to confuse, deceive or mislead. Herbs possessing such powers tend to have some physical property as an irritant, such as Cayenne, or may generate large quantities of smoke when burned. Other spells or rituals employ methods of seed-scattering, in which a multitude of seeds such as those of Poppy (*Papaver* spp.) are cast, each to serve as a separate trajectory of the intended target's fixation.

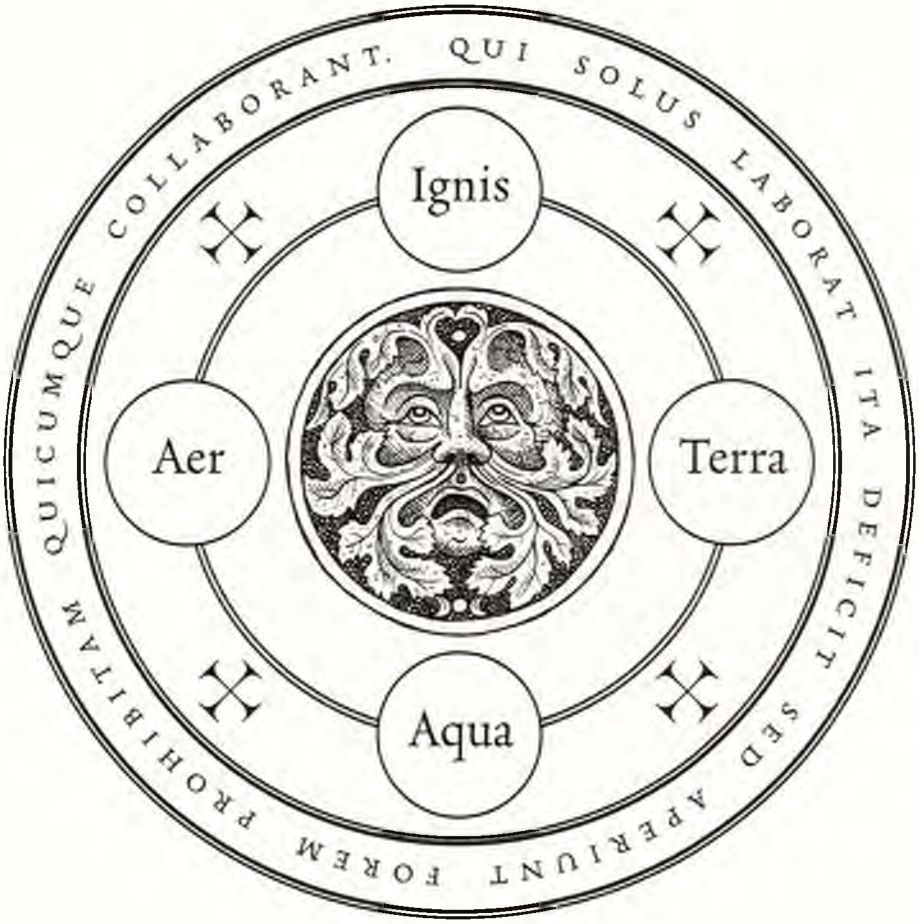
DISCORD: A disruptive power; it serves to incept, exaggerate or amplify conflicts between persons; one thinks of the golden apple of Eris. Plants to which the powers of discord are attributed are sometimes linked to Love or War.

DIVINATION: Entreating the gods or spirits for revelation of past, present or future unknown events. Routes of divination may include a manual use of the plant, such as seeds or twigs thrown as lots, or a plant may generate oracular dreams by its use as an amulet while sleeping. The divination may also be oracular, as incepted through psychoactivity, wherein the oracle is possessed of a 'divine intoxication', as in the case of the Aztec use of Ololiúqui (*Turbina corymbosa*) In herbal folk magic, the simplest plant divinations are those seeking counsel in the morphology of the plant itself, such as the plucking of Daisy petals to determine the true heart of a beloved.

ENCHANTED SPEECH: When a plant is attributed this power, it is said to provide increased power to the voice, which can then be used as a means of enchantment. It may serve actors, poets, professional singers, salespeople, suitors, those involved in legal proceedings, and, of course, liars and seducers. Of necessity, the scope of this magic includes influencing the ears of those listening. When used, a portion of the plant, or some other preparation of it, may be placed in the mouth and used in this manner.

EXORCISM: The forceful expulsion of a noxious spirit from a person, place, or object. In most traditional systems of magic, the act of exorcism takes on all the characteristics of prolonged warfare between the exorcist and the spirit in question. As such it concerns demonstration of authority, seizure of territory, and destruction or expulsion through superior strength. Many practitioners who believe themselves competent exorcists fail to realize that a single rite may be insufficient to defeat the adversary; some traditional exorcisms take days or weeks to accomplish, and even so are followed up by a number of magical prophylaxes.

Plants used in operations of exorcism are diverse, but their unifying quality is often


QUICUMQUE COLLABORANT. QUI SOLUS LABORAT ITA DEFICIT SED APERIUNT FOREM PROHIBITAM
Ignis
Aer
Terra
Aqua

overwhelming force. This may take the form of a dominating odor such as Asafœtida (*Ferula assafetida*), toxic action against pests as with Quassia (*Quassia amara*) or a fierce, combative nature as manifest in various types of thorns. Notably, not all plants used for exorcism are malodorous or bitter, as many have pleasant aromatic properties, such as Nutmeg (*Myristica fragrans*) or derive their power from their talismanic morphologies such as Solomon's Seal (*Polygonatum* spp.). Like herbs endowed with the power of Consecration, the 'green' and 'cleansing' scents of such plants as Rosemary (*Salvia rosmarinus*) and Tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*) are also valued for exorcism.

FERTILITY: Together with the love-charm, fertility magic and its attendant corpus of belief, gods, spirits, lore, rites and spells is one of the oldest and best-documented zones of occult power. Operations making use of it include herbs of a fecund, generative nature. The charms and spells so used fructify crops and gardens, livestock, and the human body. Magic kind of is used for remediation of waste ground or poisoned land, or for healing corporeal trauma.

Botanical materials naturally aligned with fertility magic are fruits and seeds. As the swollen, ripened, juice-laden ovary, the fruit evokes the process of conception and embryonic development. The seed, by contrast, is the safeguarding of the lineage at the culmination of this process. Flowers, aligned to the sexual act, are also frequently used.

FETISHES: This term indicates a particular potency for storing power when made into a statue, talisman, or other magical object. This is often the case with certain woods, such as Linden (*Tilia* spp.); fruits such as Coconut (*Cocos nucifera*) and roots, such as Mandrake (*Mandragora* spp.). The botanical power of the fetish is more than simply a malleable material or a suggestive shape, it also often indicates a tradition wherein a spirit or god dwells within a plant-part, and can be accessed through it.

FIDELITY: It is that power encouraging or compelling sexual fidelity between spouses or lovers. The best charms of fidelity contain two components: a magnification of the energetic bond between lovers, and the creation of a barrier against the charms and temptations of others. The most rudimentary fidelity spells are mere bewitchment; the greatest are those concerned with empowering oaths and loving devotion.

FORTIFICATION: The power of strengthening the body and its components of mind and spirit. When expressed as a medicine or therapeutic, the same principle is expressed physiologically as a tonic.

FUNERARY: Certain plants are traditionally used in death-rites, or in festivals of the dead; the powers attributed to them can indicate the spirits' preference for the plant as an offering, or may be symbolic or religious in nature. Other plants are believed to convey power to the discarnated spirit and aid in its transition, or to comfort the bereaved.

GAMBLING: A power for increasing skill, acuity, charisma, and gaining the favor of spirits of Commerce. It is allied with the plant-powers of Warfare, Commerce, Hunting, and Confusion, due to its tendency to fog or confuse the minds of opponents.

HEALING: That power which simultaneously rids disease, nourishes the body or mind, and assists in the return of homeostasis. Plants to which this power is attributed are almost always part (or a remnant) of a tradition of magical medicine; they work upon the level of spirits, gods, or saints to augment the cure.

HARMONY: That essence which increases resonance, rather than dissonance, between persons. It is usually used for the pacification of quarrels, or for situations in which large, diverse groups of persons must work together toward a common goal. Plant portions valued for the work of harmony often include flowers, their essences, and oils, their unctuous qualities the better to lubricate and ease friction.

HEX-BREAKING: As for Curse-Lifting.

HOUSE WARDS: Trees and herbs that protect the home. Such plants may form extensive, living hedges around the dwelling, or stand as single specimens in significant locations. Plant parts may also be used for their powers as House-Wards. In one such tradition, leaves, roots, branches, bulbs or other plant parts are hung above doorways, preventing the visitation of noxious persons or intrusive spirits. Other modes of use include charms, powders, floor washes, sachets, and bouquets, for both interior and exterior use. Many plants which are too toxic for human use, such as the consummate irritant Poison Oak, can nevertheless serve as outdoor perimeter House Wards, as can species possessing excessive thorns, such as *Opuntia*.

HUNTING: That plant-power which aids the hunter. It may function via a number of routes, as by attracting of spirits sympathetic to the hunter; cloaking oneself while traversing the terrain; befuddlement or trickery of prey to weaken its defenses; enhancing the strength and cunning of the hunter; and locating and seizing the prey. This herb-potency is one of the oldest and most practical known; the best hunting allies are herbs native to the area one is hunting in.

IMPOTENCE/STERILITY: To disrupt arousal, libido, or the ability to procreate. Plants embodying this power are often reservoirs of anaphrodisiac, abortifacient or mutagenic compounds, or possess some other biochemical activity which is hostile to the reproductive system. In the lore of magic it is a power frequently associated with the cursing and blasting activities of witchcraft.

INVISIBILITY: This magical power is found in a small number of plant-spells, and is best described as the power to go unseen or unnoticed. Magical operations of invisibility often contain one of two elements, or both. The first is to benumb the eyes of those watching; the second is to conjure divertive illusion or distractions that draw onlookers' attentions elsewhere.

LONGEVITY: That power reckoned to slow the ravages of time and the elements upon the body, as well as fortify the powers of juvenation.

NECROMANCY: The power to raise, or communicate with, the spirits of the dead.

OBLATION: The power of offering or sacrifice. Typically, operations of offering or oblation are the concern of religious devotion, but they also play a role in traffic with spirits, whether in church, the graveyard, or Faust's magic circle. Plants offered to spirits or gods are often aromatic or esculent, or are otherwise greatly treasured, as the nature of sacrifice necessitates that the offering given is of the highest value to the giver. They are also ritually harvested in the name of the entity they are intended for. Where it is devils or repugnant spirits who receive the tithe, the plant-offerings are often poisonous, hideous in appearance, or possessed of awful characteristic.

ONEIROGENESIS: The power of a plant to provoke dreams. The power may arise chiefly from chemistry, but there are many plants whose dream-inducing powers cannot be definitively linked to its constituent principles. As such, their oneirogenic powers arise from folklore or mysteries long forgotten, or may yet relate to the plant as the subject of waking obsession.

POTENTIATION: As used herein, *Potentiation* refers to a plant which, by its combination with other plants or magical materials, increases the strength of the magical operation in its entirety. Examples of plants for potentiation include Tobacco (*Nicotiana* spp.), Cinquefoil (*Potentilla* spp.), Laurel (*Laurus nobilis*) and Angelica (*Angelica* spp.).

PROTECTION FROM DISEASE: A magical power to guard the user against any infectious essence, be it microbial, chemical, or magical in nature. Many plants possessing these virtues were employed by the plague doctors of medieval Europe, and have strong fragrances, such as Juniper.

PROTECTION FROM MALEFICIA: With the exception of the love-charm, protection from maleficia is the most prevalent spiritual power attributed to plants, and probably also the oldest. We may usefully define such powers as protection from magic users of ill intent, and their works. In historical records of the English language, these malefactors are frequently referred to as 'witches', with other similar descriptors in other European languages, as with the German *hexe*. It is therefore important at this juncture to ask the question: in these cases, what does 'witch' mean?

In English, modern usage of the word 'witch' is varied in meaning. The classical meaning of *witch*, is the medieval sorceress who practiced the ecstatic rites of the Sabbat; it is this archetype which has accreted a great deal of romanticism in folk tales, art and literature. In the context of contemporary religious movements, 'witch' is sometimes used for a person identifying as a Wiccan—a practitioner of a twentieth-century recension of earlier European ritual magic systems (particularly Solomonic ritual magic), fused with seasonal pagan-inspired elements including duotheism. This modern identification denies the essential historical sinistrality of the witch. Another meaning occurs in the rural United States, where the word *witch* can occasionally refer to someone with the power to dowse metals or subterranean water using rods. In rare cases, especially in Britain, it was formerly used for healers or cunning-folk who called themselves 'white witches'. However, in its oldest and most potent usage, *witch* meant a sorcerer, most often one of ill-intent, a malefactor and a criminal.

For the purposes of this volume, where an herb is ascribed the power of 'protection against witches' in older lore, I have interpreted 'witch' to mean a magical malefactor. Such attributions have also been rendered in many places as 'protection from maleficia.'

PURIFICATION: It is sometimes also called 'cleansing'. Its essence is to remove unwanted spirit-detritus, but also to potentiate the native powers of that being purified. When addressing this herbal power, one must also consider the concept of contamination. Rites using purificatory plants are often used in the context of a previous contamination, the source of which varies. Such contamination might result from a dead body, an evil spirit, the breaking of taboo, the spilling of blood, or proceed as a baneful influence from the gods themselves. Another important magical usage of such plants is the purification of the body prior to participation in ritual or religious observance.

RECONSTITUTION: That power which aids a person's return to the world of the flesh, after being immersed in the world of spirit. Such immersion may take the form of ecstasy, be it by trance, dancing, prayer, meditation, sexual activity, use of psychoactives, or any other dissociative component of a magical operation. Reconstitution is commonly called 'earthing' or 'bringing back'; it may be accomplished in the simplest of ways by touching any living plant having its roots in the soil; trees having dense, hard wood and firm roots (such as Oaks) are best for this purpose. Other efficacious methods use suffumigations of woody, acrid or pungent smoke, and eating herbs which possess earthy, sharp or bitter flavors such as leaf of Milk Thistle (*Sylibum marianum*). In Umbanda, as in many other syncretic religions, those who have been 'ridden' by the spirits are reconstituted through blowing smoke of Tobacco into the ears. Use of plant essential oils as aromatic reconstitutors is also effective, with Oil of Rosemary being one of the best.

REVELATION: A power revealing that which is hidden. Most frequently, it relates to bodies of magical operations intended to locate lost objects, or secreted treasure. It may also unmask that which is masked.

REVERIE: A plant-power characterized by its inception of a contemplative mental state. Plants with both stimulating *and* mildly soporific or sedative qualities excel at this.

SNARING: Certain types of swollen roots, corms or tubers, often taking the shape of spheres or balls, serve as 'spirit-traps' for trapping and confining troublesome entities. In some cases, once the trap is sprung, or is otherwise 'full', it is buried in a location far from the home.

STOP GOSSIP: The power to silence rumormongers and the indiscreet. In collections of old spells and charms, this is a frequent operation, and a certain number of them feature plants. A recurring type of plant part used for this purpose is the Thorn.

SUMMONING: The power to conjure a spirit. Many such plants possess highly fragrant attributes; others have gained a reputation for occult power as 'spirit-food', meaning that their presence in a ritual, especially when burned, sprinkled or scattered, is attractive to spirits of all kinds, and invite their company.

TRAVEL: A number of plants have ancient repute for aiding the traveler, through their powers of granting expediency, navigation, and personal safety. Many such plants serve as talismans, either worn on the clothing or kept in the pocket.

VAMPIRISM: a magical parasitism, by definition also involving a host, or preferred victim. It is quite literally the leeching of power from another, much in the manner of parasitic worms. In most cases it is a baneful magic, yet not without its consequences for the operator. While one may experience an initial power-euphoria upon feeding, one must also realize that when one thrives upon the essence of another entity, one not only consumes its desired qualities but also its pathologies and problems. Plants of parasitic habitus such as Dodder (*Cuscuta* spp.) that rob the virtues of their host, are often aligned with this occult principle, and may be used in vampiric rites or spells. A number of such plants are also resonant with the most sacred gods and principles of humanity, such as Sandalwood (*Santalum* spp).

Ward Against Noxious Spirits: Generally classed as an apotropaic power, it is probably the most common magical power attributed to plants, with the exception of love charms. Here, a 'noxious spirit' is defined as any abhorrent, uninvited, or unwelcome spirituous entity; this term is preferred over the term 'demon', because of the latter's modern associations within Christianity.

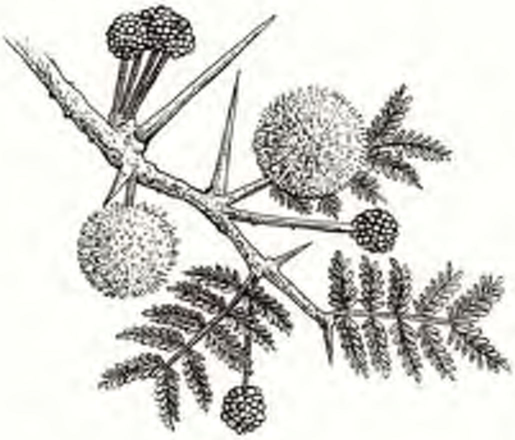
Beyond the fact of it being an uninvited guest, a noxious spirit may offend in other ways, such as causing disease, corruption, stagnation, confusion, lethargy, and other contraindications to life, health, and magical operations. Thus, under this rubric, a noxious spirit may not necessarily have the familiar fangs, claws, and malodorous breath of the demon of theological hyperbole: to the magician, Jesus Christ may be considered every bit as noxious as the Lernæan Hydra, and some may invoke them—or exorcise them—side by side.

It is also interesting to note that a significant amount of the herbs credited with the powers to drive away such entities have strong antiseptic and antimicrobial properties. Many ancient medical paradigms attributed all inexplicable diseases to the action of evil spirits.

WARFARE: It describes the potencies of certain plants for protecting the soldier and ensuring triumph, or empowering combat weapons such as firearms.

WEALTH: Powers invoked, summoned and manipulated for an increase of either currency of material wealth. Plants used in such work are frequently known for their powers or symbolism of fertility. They may also be gold in color, or feature shapes in the morphology suggesting money, such as seeds or seed pods resembling coins.

WEATHER: Certain plants are identified in spells of controlling weather, either in raising storms or clearing the same. In addition, a few plants are ascribed the ability to predict the weather.



ACACIA

Acacia spp.
Fabaceæ (Pea Family)

THE botanical genus *Acacia*, containing about 1,400 species, is one of the largest and most beloved divisions of the Pea family; they are typically trees or shrubs from dry tropical and warm temperate regions. Though cosmopolitan in distribution, Australia offers a particularly striking diversity of species. Most Acacias are fast-growing and thrive well in adversity, proffering grandiose and fragrant floral displays. Acacia species have been imported to numerous locales as ornamentals and subsequently multiplied in the wild, earning legal designations as 'noxious weeds'. Yet this same capacity for eager growth in diverse environments makes it a favored tree in regions where firewood is scarce or eroding soil needs stabilization. As concerns the character of the tree, we find a pleasant spirit instilled with the traits of hardiness, proliferation, adaptability, and ingenuity.

As corresponding with the esoteric powers of the planets, Acacia is Solar in nature, being expansive, healing, and fortifying; it also possesses attributes of Mars and is used in binding and transfixion of evil. In ancient magical practices, the tree was prized for its powers of sexual attraction, wealth, and aid in childbirth. Acacia was favored in ancient Egyptian love-spells, sometimes in conjunction with honey. These general characteristics penetrate the entirety of the genus, though exhibiting considerable diversity among species. As a whole, the tree's unified power can be characterized as an arboreal physician, being a preservative of body and spirit, and an embodiment of the perpetual incarnative struggle against the forces of decay.

Its name derives from the Greek *akḗ*, meaning 'point', referencing the plant's spiny nature, a characteristic essential to understanding its esoteric powers. Common names for individual Acacia species are myriad and include Cat Claw (*A. gregii*); Thirty-Thorn (*A. seyal*); Morocco Gum (*A. gummifera*); Gum Arabic Tree (*A. senegal*); Khair, Cutch, Catechu (*A. catechu*); Fragrant Myall; Yarran (*A. homalophylla*); and Babul (*A. nilotica*). There are hundreds more.

In general, all parts of the tree are useful, including the gum, bark, leaves, flowers, thorns, seed pods and seeds. In perfumery, extraction of the Popinac (*Vachellia farnesiana*, formerly classified as *Acacia farnesiana*) yields the exhilarating and uplifting Cassie Absolute; essential oil of Mimosa originates in the blossoms of Silver Wattle (*Acacia dealbata*). The trees are also valued for extraction of dyes, particulary *A. nilotica*, which yields brown, black and yellow.

The wood was used for building the Tabernacle of the ancient Hebrews, and *Acacia tortilis* has been identified as the Shittah Tree, from which the *shittim* wood of the Ark of the Covenant was taken. In some traditions, Acacia symbolizes immortality or the afterlife; full ritual burial among Scottish Rite Freemasons includes a branch of Acacia, laid on the breast of the deceased, and sealed within the coffin. The Acacia and its mysteries are pictured on some traditional Masonic tracing-boards, particularly that depicting the mysteries of the Third Degree, where it is associated with the Head of the Coffin, and the direction of West—realm of the down-going sun.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF ACACIA

Nobility, Righteousness, Impeccability, Pertinacity,
Respite, Legacy, Illumination, Deliverance,
Diurnal Radiance, Healing Fire,
Sacred Enclosure, Divine Union,
Concealed Mystery.

As used in sorcery and magic, the wood commands an ancient totemic power of restraining the spirits of the dead. Certain Buddhist tantras utilize Acacia thorns (*khadirakīlas*) for raising and reſtraining the fearsome *vetala*, the corpse animated by necromancy. Ritual *kīlas* for subduing obſtreperous spirits were later made from its wood. Among the Toda people of India, certain thorny species produce branches known as 'Sticks of the Witches' and are used for cursing.

In Malta, Acacia blossoms were taboo in the domicile: if they were inadvertently brought inside, they brought death to the head of the household within the space of one year. The bark of A. *farnesiana* is worn around the neck in eaſtern India as an amulet to prevent bites from poisonous snakes.

Wood from a considerable number of species has long been burned purely as a fragrance, to perfume clothes, ritual items and the body itself. Leaves of the Broughton Wattle (A. *salicina*) were burned and inhaled by indigenous Auſtralians for inducing a deep sleep. In North America, the Papago women used the fragrant blossoms of Cat's Claw, *Acacia gregii*, for sachets; the wood was used for the manufacture of ceremonial prayer ſticks. Species containing significant amounts of visionary tryptamines include A. *obtusifolia*, A *maidenii*, A. *sophorde*, A. *phlebophylla*, and A. *longifolia*.

In ethnomedicine, thorns from certain species are employed to treat aſthma; in general, both flowers and leaves are anti-inflammatory in nature. The root boaſts mucilaginous virtues and may be used for sore throats. The resinous extract of Black Catechu, A. *catechu*, is a specific for chronic diarrhea with colitis; it is also taken as an anaphrodisiac by Hindu widows. In some traditional medicines, the branches, leaves, and flowers of Acacia are placed in pits, atop burning coals, to produce smokes which heal patients of vertigo and other nervous conditions.

The thorns are of especial importance in concentrating the spiritual power of the plant. This core potency of the tree is well known in Kenya, where dried shrubs of *Acacia polyacantha* serve as the basic building block of traditional liveſtock corrals. The punishing spines, rivaling the utility of barbed wire, are sufficient to keep entire flocks penned. Extending this principle to the realm of sorcery, the puncturing aspects of the tree may be entreated for personal protection, or that of the household, either by using the thorns as a physical fetish, or by visualizing a woven barrier of thorned branches encircling the ground to be protected.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Strength, Fortification, Transfixion.
Element: Fire.
Planet: Sun.
Deific Forms: Aſtarte, Ishtar, Osiris, Helios.
Virtue: Guardianship, Preservation of the Flesh.
Body Part: Heart.
Therapeutic: Antibacterial, anti-tumor.
Poison: some species contain potassium fluoroacetate ($C_2H_2FKO_2$), used as a rodenticide.
Emblem: A radiant solar disc with arm extended earthward, bearing a sword.

ACHIOTE

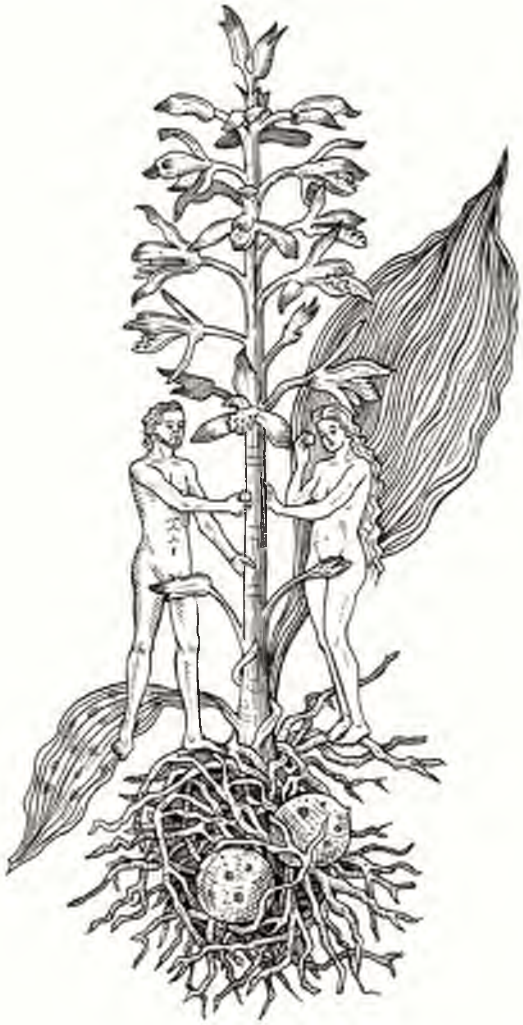
Bixa orellana

Bixaceæ (Achiote Family)

URUCUM, as Annatto is known in the regions where it grows, is a tropical shrub growing from 5 to 10 meters in height, and native to the Caribbean, and Central and South America. It is identified by its cordate—or heart-shaped—leaves, and pink flowers. The fruit is a red, prickly pod containing reddish-brown seeds yielding both a yellow dye and a sweet, earthy spice, which taſtes mildly of peppers. Though its aromatics are subtle, its contribution to the flavor of Latin American cuisine is diſtinctive and readily perceived. It is much used in commerce, especially the food induſtry, for its yellow tint, which is often present in commercial cheeses and butter. The Aztecs called it *achiotl*, which gave rise to its Mexican Spanish name Achiote.

Indigenous tribes in Central and South America used extractives of the seed for body painting, to protect the wearer from evil spirits, and as a protectant againſt insects and sun exposure. As a concentrated cosmetic for bodily ornamentation, it lends a bright red color to the skin. In this manner, it was used both for a ritual adornment and as war paint. The ground seed also has been used as an aphrodisiac; it was also added to the traditional Central American chocolate preparations to give the drink a red color. In South America, the plant has traditional associations with the powers of Immortality and Longevity.

The *Usi* ghoſt-cults of the Foi people of Papua New Guinea make use of *Bixa orellana* in forging a link between new initiates and their familiar spirits. Along with pods of Achiote, the ceremony required young men to ingeſt shoots and the juices of two *Cordyline* species, male human molars, and exudations of various insects. The items were considered the 'fruit' of the familiar spirits, and if successfully digested, the spirit-link, and the powers attending upon it, was forged.



Adam and Eve Root

Aplectrum hyemale
Orchidaceæ (Orchid Family)

A native terrestrial orchid of the eastern United States, Adam and Eve puts forth a single large, dark green ovate leaf having parallel veins, a pale green stalk tinged with purple, and yellow-green flowers with purple tips 2.5 centimeters long. These subtle colors, combined with its preference for dwelling in the mottled light of woodland canopies, often camouflage the entire plant from view, recollecting the bodily concealment of primordial man and woman with leaves. The flowering period is 2–3 weeks in late spring and the seeds are often of low viability. The so-called 'roots' are in fact a pair of modified underground stems, known as corms, approximately 2–3 cm in diameter, and which serve as the plant's chief source of asexual propagation. It flourishes in the damp floors of deciduous hardwood forests, preferring riparian corridors. Because of its highly specific cultural requirements in its native habitats, it is a challenging plant to maintain in cultivated gardens.

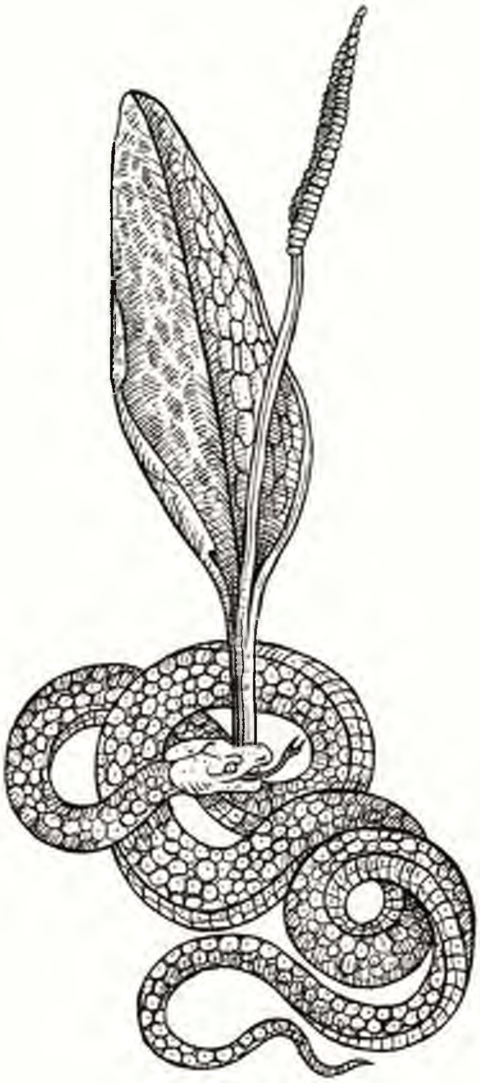
The two joined corms, lying side by side, yield a glutinous putty, hence the origin of one of the plant's common names 'Putty Root.' This mucilaginous starch was formerly used as a fattening agent for babies, as well as domesticated pigs, and also for its efficacy in repairing cracked pottery. Healers among the Catawba employed the corms as a precious medicine, pounded, powdered, and boiled, for headaches; a poultice was used to draw boils.

In North American folk magic, the corms are prized for their efficacy in charms of Love and Attraction, often used in conjunction with a lodestone. For a spell to attract a man, the 'Adam' portion is given to a man by a woman; to bewitch a woman, a man gives unto his desired the 'Eve' portion.

The plant's power of Attraction may be used to strengthen already existing bonds, as demonstrated by an African American charm in which roots are given to each mutually committed lover. The corms are floated in water for divination, the answer to the question being revealed based on whether 'Adam' or 'Eve' floats to the surface. In *The Orchids of New England* (1884), Henry Baldwin notes its use in the Southern United States as a magical amulet worn on the body. The Adam and Eve root is said by Hoodoo conjurers to enjoy the company of other magical roots, especially the Devil's Shoestring and Ruler-of-the-Earth, to whom it is said to speak.

The Spirit-Retinue of Adam and Eve Root

Syzygy, Viability, Coupling, Fusion, Agglutination, Progeny, Sapience, Sublunary Divinity, Beloved Concord, Ephemeral Plasm, Hidden Enticement, Carnal Swelling, & Primeval Union.



ADDER'S TONGUE FERN

Ophioglossum vulgatum
Polypodiaceæ (Polypody Family)

A TINY, hollow-stemmed fern, the Adder's Tongue grows from 7 to 25 cm in height, with two distinctive and differentiated fronds, one wide and leaflike, and the other bearing spores and resembling a snake's tongue. It prefers seclusion amidst grasses in damp pastures, woodland and meadows, and though elusive, is a welcome sight to the botanist. The genus *Ophioglossum*, or True Adder's Tongues, contains 20 accepted species of small ferns with cosmopolitan distribution similar in appearance and esoteric properties to *O. vulgatum*. The parts used in magic are the roots and fronds.

In medical traditions of antiquity, the plant was a vulnerary of some repute, though it is much ignored in modern physic. The precious juice of the leaves was drunk for internal wounds and bruises. Plants gathered at the waning moon were regarded as superior for the making of tumor-dressings.

In the astrological medicine of times past, Adder's Tongue was considered to be governed by the emanations of the Moon, associated as it is with damp, hidden, and watery environs. Among animals, it bears totemic resonance with serpents, in particular the European Viper (*Viperus bera*). In operations of magic, the fern was also associated with evil and witchcraft, employed for its powers of Bidding and Coercion. Its reclusive and watery nature is further associated with the serpent's quality of flexion and undulation, and the particular quality of Lying in Wait. In English folklore, the plant is under the protection of the sprite Robin Goodfellow.

Like the Old Serpent himself, the plant also possesses a reputation for wisdom and healing, and has been used for its powers of Binding, as well as in folk charms to arrest gossip. As a fern strongly possessing the virtues of constriction, pieces of the herb may be used to contain disease and tainted powers infecting a ritual object. A classic Adder's Tongue charm steeps the plant in cold water, then applies it to a wound, until it becomes warm: the plant is then buried in sodden ground and the affliction will be cured.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF ADDER'S TONGUE

Subterfuge, Repose, Calculation, Influence, Projection, Puncture, Venom, Innoculation, Muscular Tightening, Coiled Reserve, Hooded Luminescence, Potential Energy, and Verdant Salvation.

AGRIMONY

Agrimonia eupatoria
Roseaceæ (Rose Family)

A PLANT much favoring disturbed ground, Agrimony may be found along roadsides, or haunting waste ground and dumps; it is tomentose, bearing gold star-shaped flowers in summer, and reaching a height of 1 meter. The blossoms of the dried herb emanate a slight but agreeable apricot-like odor. In the garden, it is a friend to bees, as well as attracting beneficial insects such as syrphid flies.

Its occult principles encompass Blessing, Exorcism, Healing, and Protection from Thieves. By tradition, its spirit and complex of powers fall under the planetary patronage of Jupiter. The plant has borne a considerable variety of common names including Egrimoyne, Sticklewort, Philanthropos, Garclive and Cocklebur.

The fragrance of the dried herb possesses great stamina, and over time the scent of a prepared Agrimony sachet will become more complex, and in many cases sweeter. Some older collections of magical lore relay the use of Agrimony to bring on an enchanted sleep, either for the purposes of rest, or aping the appearance of death. This benefit is best reaped by sewing the herb into a dream sachet or pillow, in combination with other restful herbs such as Scullcap and Hops.

The *Munich Handbook*, a fifteenth-century Bavarian grimoire, contains a charm for obtaining favor, requiring the magician to suffumigate the image of the one whose favor he desires with an incense of Cinnamon, Long Pepper (*Piper longum*) and Agrimony.

In the Channel Islands, Agrimony was used by Guernsey girls for dream divination to reveal future husbands. Two nine-leaved sprigs of Agrimony were bound in the form of a cross charm with new pins and placed beneath the pillow before sleeping.

As a remedy for the afflicted, the plant has anti-inflammatory, and antiseptic characteristics. It is employed for liver complaints, or as a general tonic for that same organ; it also is reputed to ease the dry cough. In folk medicine, the plant was believed to possess the magical power for drawing thorns from the flesh and was also indicated for passive hemorrhage and chronic conditions of the mucous membranes. A writer in the time of Chaucer recommended Agrimony, prepared with human blood and pounded frogs, as a remedy for internal hemorrhages.

In Scotland it is known as *Muir droighin*. A rich yellow dye can be extracted from the flowering tops, mordanted with Alum. Alternately the flowers may be pressed into paper or light woods for a lasting golden stain. When collecting the plant, the young shoots, leaves and flowers are best harvested at midsummer.

ALDER

Alnus spp.

Betulaceæ (Birch Family)

THE DECIDUOUS Alder grows to 25 meters, producing cone-like fruits, though it is not a conifer. The genus contains 35 species distributed mostly in the Northern hemisphere, though some populations extend to the western coast of South America. For extraction of color, the tree yields three excellent dyes: red from the bark, brown or black from the twigs, and green from the blossoms. Alder bark was valued for tanning hides.

With its roots deeply set into riverbanks, the Alder occupies a liminal elemental position between earth and water, partaking in the sustaining qualities of both. Its hard, dense wood is prized for its resistance to rot, a quality linking the tree to immortality and the preservation of the dead. Along with pier and wharf pilings, its timber is also used to fashion for items such as doors—themselves powerful emblems of the liminal—an essential barrier between the interior dwelling and the external forces of weather. Along the riparian corridors of the Pacific Northwest, many a thick-woven stand of Red Alder (*Alnus rubra*), have served as my preferred place of solitary contemplation, and a place for remembrance of the dead.

In medicine, it is the bark, leaves, fruits that are used. Traditional remedies employ the tannin-rich bark in decoction for a sore throat gargle; this remedy is also useful against dermal inflammation and has long enjoyed use in Native American medicine as a remedy against the tormenting blisters of Poison Oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*). Medicinally, Black Alder bark is also a tonic, febrifuge, and astringent; the berries of the same will induce retching and have been used as a reliable emetic in folk medicine. Some healers prescribe the leaf for dropsy; and a strong infusion makes a footbath for the weary wanderer. Like other trees in the Birch Family, the bark also contains salicin, the metabolic progenitor of the potent medicine salicylic acid, used in folk remedies and industrial pharmaceuticals alike.

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> *Alder is of all other the most faithful of watery and boggy places. The shadow of this tree does feed and nourish the very grass that grows under it; and being set and well plashed, it is an excellent defence to the banks of rivers. The wood is likewise useful...for such building and works as lie continually under water, where it will harden like stone.*
>
> JOHN EVELYN,
> *Sylva* 1664

Its power of removing evil and affliction is manifest in an old Norwegian charm for breaking a curse upon a gun. The jinxed firearm is first allowed to warm beside a fire, then it is whipped repeatedly with an Alder switch for 'as long as you wish to torture him who has put the hex on your gun.'

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF ALDER

Perpetuity, Durability, Deliverance, Vigilance, Paradox, Hypnagogia, Sodden Embankments, Submerged Roots, Haunted Shallows, Forgotten Names, Whispered Counsel, Oracular Heads, and Ancestral Presence.

In English *wortcunning*, Alder was associated with the ring finger; its power was to 'diagnose all maladies of a doubtful mind.' Hoodoo root-doctors of the North American Carolinas esteemed the Alder as a protective tree; its root-dust forms the basis of several known charms of protection, in combination with gunpowder and graveyard dirt. In Nova Scotia, its branches are used by diviners as the favored rod for water-dowsing. In other European traditions, the branches were used to manipulate the weather.

In Bavaria, the *Pfingstl*, a Whitsuntide representative of the tree-spirits, was clad head to toe in leaves and flowers of Alder and Hazel. In Welsh Mythology, the Alder was associated with Brân the Blessed, the god of prophecy. As such, the tree participates in his iconic symbols of the severed head, the crow, the horse, and the skull.

The glaciated valleys of southeastern Alaska contain dense thickets of *Alnus rubra*, known to the Tlingit people as *sh'eix'w*, and which has been used for making traditional masks. Evoking Alder's connections to the color red, German lore relates that a red-haired woman could summon storms by grasping an Alder tree and shaking it.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Prophecy, Divination, Longevity.
Elements: Earth and Water.
Planet: Saturn.
Deific Forms: Brân the Blessed, Janus.
Virtue: Liminality, and unification of material and immaterial realms.
Body Part: Head, Ring Finger.
Corporeal Action: Preservation.
Medicine: Anodyne, anti-inflammatory, antitumor.
Pharmaceutical Virtues: Salicin, betulin, lupeol, tannins.
Emblem: A stone tower rising from a lake, surmounted by a crow.

ALKANET

Alkanna tinctoria

Boraginaceæ (Borage Family)

A PERENNIAL herb native to the Mediterranean, much-relished by bees, its dusky blue flowers emerging in early summer, with hirsute, erect stems and leaves, and an obese taproot. A worthy denizen of the garden, it is hardy and establishes itself with tenacity. In folk medicine its action upon the body is depurative, expectorant, and antitussive, though it is truly a remedy which the ages have passed by. The root was at one time highly esteemed in elixirs to calm pulmonary afflictions, and to cleanse the blood; it has also been used to treat various dermal afflictions.

Its red color *orchanet* has been valued in cosmetics since ancient times, particularly rouge. At the molecular level, Alkanet's sanguinary glory is expressed by the principle Alkannin ($C_{16}H_{16}O_5$), a powerful naphthoquinone derivative with a considerable range of color expression as a dye. The pigment is concentrated most intensely in the root, which may be dried and subsequently tinctured in alcohol. Theophrastus wrote of Alkanet serving as a dye for red perfumes; it was also used for coloring wines and tinting inks, some of which have survived in ancient manuscripts. The root of its boraginaceous cousin *Anchusa officialis* also produces a ruddy color, and it too is called Alkanet, though less often used.

Alkanet is accorded the planetary attributes of Venus, chiefly for its arresting red hue. Its occult powers are Allure, Purification, Exorcism, and Coercion. The herb also has a reputation among the faithful of Vodun for chasing away or bringing to ruin one's financial enemies.

Attesting to its glamour, the deep red color of the root has also been used to effect illusions. In the Cathedral of St. Januarius, T. W. Aveling reported that Alkanet was used in combination with sulfuric ether and spermaceti to achieve the simple deception of a phial of the Saint's 'blood', which periodically liquefied and solidified, according to ambient temperature.

All-Heal

Prunella vulgaris

Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

HEART of the Earth, as All-Heal is also known, is a hardy perennial native to Europe but now common throughout the northern hemisphere. The herb grows to 25 cm high, with lanceolate leaves and pale purple flowers. Typical of the Mint Family, it possesses a square stem, and the entire plant is edible. In folk medicine, All-Heal has been employed to relieve coughs and other respiratory afflictions. Among the characters of the planets, it is ascribed the dominion of Mars, and to the dual elemental correspondence of Earth and Water.

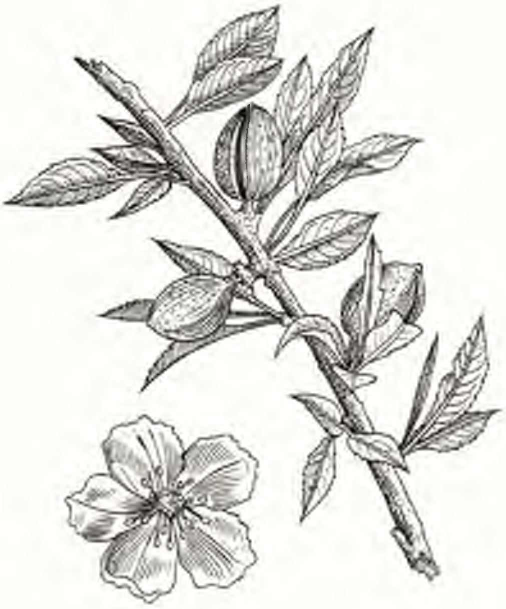
Magically, it is also an ally in hunting and warfare. The Ojibwa brewed decoctions of the root as a powerful hunting medicine, to bring aid in perceiving, tracking, and killing their prey. Some European lore places a taboo on plucking the flowers, warning that they belong to Satan; to take them is to risk offending him and invite one's own infernal abduction.

Almond

Prunus dulcis

Rosaceæ (Rose Family)

THERE are two kinds of Almond tree: the sweet (P. *dulcis*) and the bitter (P. *dulcis* var. *amara*). From the Bitter Almond, an aromatic essential oil is extracted and rectified to remove certain cyanide-associated poisons. The resulting oil is then used in cuisine, such as marzipan, but most almond extract is now synthetically produced. Oil of the Sweet Almond by contrast is devoid of scent and is employed in cosmetics; this tree is also the source of the edible nut. Both trees are deciduous to a height of 9 meters, originating in the Middle East. In agriculture, cultivars grown for the nuts are often grafted onto other species of *Prunus* for disease resistance. A small American variety, known as California Desert Almond (P. *fasciculata*) evolved in the Western United States and was historically prized as a wild edible by certain tribes such as the Cahuilla; under cultivation it thrives in xeriscapes and coastal gardens. It is at once hardy and stoic, producing its well-armored fruits in adversity, yet its secret heart is greasy and unctuous. In the ancient Near East, seed of Bitter Almond was used in magical perfumes and ointments and was known as *sirdu*.



Essential oil of Bitter Almond contains 95% benzaldehyde and 3% prussic acid. This poison, found in many trees of the genus *Prunus*, is a species of cyanide formed during the process of essential oil extraction. Cyanide is not, however, present in the raw almond kernel. In addition to the prussic-cyanic complexes found in Almond, the nuts can be infested with aflatoxin, a carcinogen produced by two fungi, *Aspergillus flavus* and *Aspergillus parasiticus*. Many humans who eschew it do so to avoid these vermin, rather than on the basis of nut allergy.

Almond wood is prized because of the straightness of the branches, as well as its hardness upon curing. In some ancient magical systems, wands forged of Almond branches were especially esteemed at conferring abundance, fertility, and wealth. A magic wand of Almond is among the magician's regalia specified by Abraham the Jew in the early 17th century continental grimoire *Book of Abramelin*:

> You shall also have a Wand of Almond-tree wood, smooth and straight, of the length of about from half an ell to six feet.

Its rhabdomantic properties are also recognized: rods of Almond have traditionally been used for dowsing treasure in Tuscany.

In addition to its Mercurial properties, the tree is also linked with with the powers of Venus: some traditional English wedding-cakes employ Bitter Almond, along with sweet icing, to represent the sweet and bitter aspects of marriage. The cake was thought to bring fertility and abundance, and unmarried girls were encouraged to sleep with a slice of the cake beneath their pillows, so they might dream of their husbands-to-be, hence the name 'Dreaming Bread.' A Moroccan sexual charm to increase a man's virility prescribes the eating of pounded Almonds and Honey for three successive mornings. In Greece, traditional offerings to the *Moirai* (the Fates), included honey-cakes and white Almonds, usually left in caves.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF ALMOND

Conduction, Resonance, Virility, Remuneration, Reward, Dominion, Ascendancy, Complaisance, Unctuousness, Formality, Worldly Possession, Connubial Delight, and Joyful Commerce.

In April of 1586, Edward Kelly, scryer to the Elizabethan magus John Dee, looking beneath the branches of an Almond tree in a vineyard in Prague, miraculously found three magical books he had burnt 20 days earlier. These were *The Book of Enoch*; *The 48 Claves Angelica*, and the gathering of the 30 Aires, entitled *Liber Scientia Terrestris Auxilii Victoriae*. These books of spiritual origin, in part, came to inform the modern occult systems of Enochian Magic, based on Dee and Kelley's ritual congress with angelic intelligences.

The mystery of the Almond is associated with one of the few surviving monuments of the ancient Christian Gnostics, the Sepulchre of the Aurelii in the Viale Manzoni in Italy. Among the curious paintings adorning the tomb's walls is a fresco featuring the Triad of the Pleroma with the Good Shepherd, adorned by a frame decorated with Almonds. Although it is not known which of many Gnostic sects constructed the sepulcher, the Almond symbolized the Father of the Universe for the Naassene Gnostics.

A Hebrew amulet to protect a child from the evil eye was fashioned from an Almond kernel, into which a hole was bored and filled with mercury and three white stones from the gizzard of a black cockerel. The whole was sealed with wax and worn by the child.

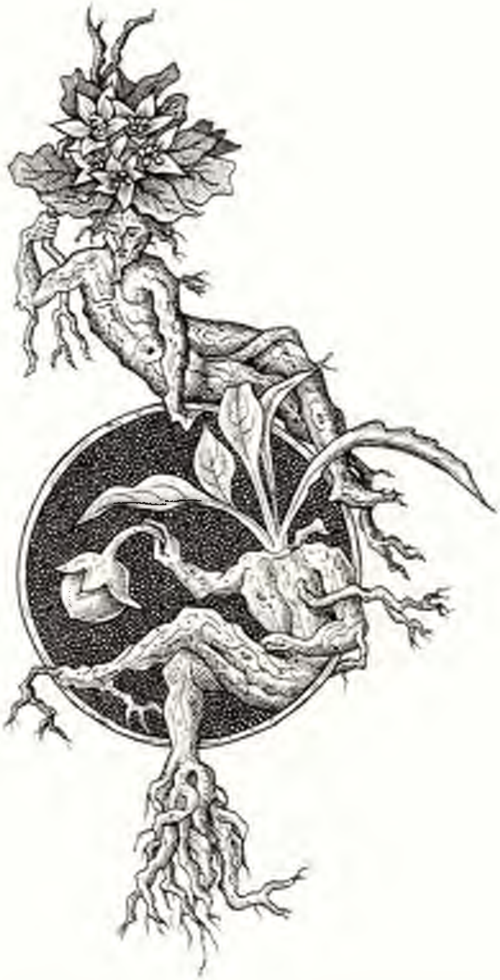
CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Fertility, Weath, Commanding.
Elements: Air.
Planet: Mercury.
Deific Forms: The Moirai, Mercury.
Virtue: Progeniture.
Body Part: Reproductive Complex.
Medicine: Emollient, Nutritive.
Poison: Cyanide.
Emblem: A grove of trees, proceeding from a single root.

ALRAUNS

GROTESQUE power-fetishes carved from the roots of various plants, Alrauns have long been a feature of Germanic magic. The making of these effigies was a magical craft arising from the vast body of European root-lore, particularly that of the Mandrake, in which plant roots were carved into humanoid figures. Such fetishes were deemed magically virtuous in accordance with the Doctrine of Signatures, which ascribed a sympathetic magical relationship between natural objects and parts of the human body. Alrauns find a British parallel with *puppettes* or *mammettes*, similar eidolons carved of White Bryony, and popular during the reign of Henry VIII.

The origin of the name *Alraun* is obscure, but may derive etymologically from a mythic, ancient cabal of sorcerers on the European continent, the *Aurinia Aventina*, who, according to Tacitus, were 'loose-haired, bare-legged witches who would slay a man, drink his blood from a skull, and divine the future from his mangled remains.' Alternatively, the name may arise from the Alyruninæ, a legendary group of magicians of Hun ancestry thought to have interbred with Wood Spirits. In modern German usage, Alraun (pl. *Alraunen*) is also used to specifically refer to *Mandragora* species, and sometimes, more simply, root-carved talismans.



The hoary poppets were created by Alraun Maidens, sorceresses who, after having carved the root into humanoid shape, conjured a familiar spirit into the fetish. The plants used for the creation of an Alraun varied. While Mandrake was favored, sometimes Bryony was utilized; the False Mandrake (*Allium victorialis*) also served as a source for the fetish. Particularly potent examples of the Alraun were also hewn from the hard roots of the Ash tree. On certain occasions the Alraun was deliberately infested with barley seeds, then buried and later exhumed at such time the grains sprouted. These asperous figures were then sold at great price to wealthy occultists in England, and on the continent.

Possessed of a dark and singular sentience, the Alraun was ascribed with many of the same magical properties as a Mandrake Root. Among these were triumph in legal matters, the revelation of buried treasure, and the magical empowerment of its steward. Certain specialized Alrauns also prevented nightmare and assisted women in childbirth. These haunted roots possessed a malefic power as well: if not pampered and meticulously cared for with a specified set of rituals, an Alraun could wreak magical havoc on its owner and host family, even cursing their descendants.

Older Alraun traditions use a limited number of plant species as the basis of the fetish, but the dense, woody roots of certain other plants are especially suited for their fashioning in the present era. Among these are Blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus*) and Henbane (*Hyoscyamus* spp.), the latter allied to Mandrake through phylogeny and long association with witchcraft. In my own locality, the wood of California Bay Laurel (*Umbellularia californica*) has served well for the creation of these simulacra, their grain being favorable to the carving of grotesques.

ALYSSUM

Alyssum spp.

Brassicaceæ (Cabbage Family)

EARTH-HUGGING annuals and perennials comprise the genus Alyssum, typically forming spreading, thick-flowered mats with blossoms of white, pink, purple or yellow. Native to Africa, Europe and Asia, many are prostrate in habitus, and some are small shrubs to 1 meter in height. There are about 200 accepted species of *Alyssum*, with several score more unassessed. The common honey-scented Sweet Alyssum, so beloved of syphid flies in the garden, is actually genus *Lobularia*, but its occult properties are the same.

Its spiritual power, which resides in the flowering tops, can be characterized as an apotropaic. When considering this magical potency, we recall that the former name of its plant family was *Cruciferae*, the 'cross-bearers,' because of the four-petaled flowers of its members. Thus, by its very morphology, the plant displayed the Sign of the Cross, a powerful symbol in Christianity, and, importantly, the great diversity of spiritual traditions it usurped. Alyssum is also an invigorator, and a bringer of harmony.

Dioscorides reports the use of Alyssum as a general magical prophylactic. As a plant charm, it is of especial merit in the resolution of quarrels, and pacification of the belligerent. Tied in a bundle and hung in the house, the plant protects human and beast from the Evil Eye; bound as a charm in a purple cloth, it drives away diseases of cattle.

Garden varieties of *Lobularia* are easy to grow and provide great returns on investment. Once established, they require little care, and serve to magnetize beneficial insects, as well as provide attractive flowers and scent. Due to their low cost as a horticultural flower, many gardeners simply replace them once they become 'leggy', but Alyssum responds well to hard pruning, and with a modicum of fertilizer will proffer repeat blossoms.

AMARANTH

Amaranthus spp.

Amaranthaceæ (Amaranth Family)

THE name *Amaranthus* derives from the Greek word denoting 'unwithering', suggesting the plant's capacity as an Everlasting—a flower that dries well and holds its color for a long period of time—and its treasured powers of immortality. There are some 50 species of *Amaranthus*, mostly occurring in tropical regions, which are grown for their colorful flowers, often bright crimson, and appearing in the shape of burning flames. The genus *Amaranthus* for the most part, is considered unremarkable in medicinal virtue, though Maude Grieve wrote that "many have use in native practice and as antidotes to snake bite..." *Amaranthus blitus* is employed as an astringent for diarrhea, and as a gargle for ulcerated mouth and throat; *A. oleraceus* is employed in India for menstrual disorders.

Amaranth is known by numerous folk appellations, including Nun's Scourge, Cockscomb, Tassel Flower, Love Lies Bleeding, and Prince's Feather, each invoking in a different manner its fanciful morphology. The plant is associated with the planetary powers of both Jupiter and Saturn; its occult attributions include Invisibility, Wealth, Immortality, Protection, and Funerary power.

Its funerary essence may be accessed both as an offering the departed or as a bridge of necromantic communion; the dried flowers may be used, alone or in combination with magically resonant herbs, to call forth the shades of the Dead. In ancient Greece, Amaranth was sacred to Artemis of Ephesus, and wreaths of Amaranth adorned the brows of the ancient statues of the gods. To honour the dead Achilles, the mourning Thessalians wore crowns of the herb at his funeral. In a curious parallel stream of lore, one type of North American Amaranth known as Madweed (*Amaranthus blitoides*) was reckoned by the Zuñi peoples to have been brought from the Underworld. In Roman Catholicism, Amaranth is one of the flowers employed to decorate churches on Ascension Day.

In Bavaria, a magical operation prescribed pulling the entire plant on a Friday, on the full moon, to create a protective talisman: those who wore such Amaranths near the chest were rendered bulletproof by the plant's powers. A similar talisman, using nearly identical methods, is prepared from the famed alpine flower Edelweiss (*Leontopodium alpinum*).

Writing in the 16th century, the Spanish explorer Hernando de Alarcón observed that in Aztec folk religion votive idols were fashioned from the flour of the grains of Huauhtli (*Amaranthus leucocarpus*). These were adored with song and drum, then later broken and distributed among the faithful as food.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF AMARANTH

Sustenance, Fructification, Virility, Adornment,
Alarm, Transmigration, Weeping, Grieving,
Return, Earthly Treasure, Bloody
Sacrifice, Cultic Worship,
and Altar Fires.

ALLSPICE

Pimenta dioica

Myrtaceæ (Eucalyptus *Family*)

ALLSPICE is a tropical evergreen tree, indigenous to the West Indies, Central and South America, reaching a height of 15 meters. It has elliptical leaves, white paniculate inflorescences, and a small berry; the aromatic wood is hard and workable. The unripe, sun-dried seed provides the spice of commerce; an essential oil is also extracted therefrom. In common with many of the arboreal Myrtaceae, all parts of the tree are aromatic.

The tree has long been an important culinary spice in the Caribbean, particularly Jamaica, where it is used in such recipes as jerk spice and alcoholic liqueurs such as falernum. Though its flavor is unique, it has been perceived as containing the gustatory elements of Cloves, Nutmeg, and Cinnamon. In the early colonial era, it was much employed as a preservative of meats, or to mask the stench of those newly rotten. This power is affirmed by its age-old Mayan use as an embalming spice, as attested by an excavation of Rio Azul, Tomb 19, in which Allspice leaves covered a body, swaddled within a textile wrap. The Maya revered it as a spice-adjunct in their potent, foaming preparations of Cacao.

Medicinally it is anaesthetic, analgesic, antioxidant, antiseptic, carminative, rubefacient, and a muscle relaxant. Oil of Allspice contains large amounts of phenols such as eugenol and cineol; as an aromatic operating on the human sensorium, it is bracing, enlivening, and, judiciously used, arousing. Some attribute an aphrodisiac quality to it, adding it to chocolate confections, or spiced wines; it can also achieve these effects through careful compounding into a massage oil.

Its planetary correspondence lies with the Sun and Venus, and its occult properties are Beneficence, Fortification, Fertility, Harmony, Wealth, and Love-Charming. The ground seeds are employed in incenses and magical powders for entreating money, and the conjuration of those spirits helpful to this task. A Hoodoo wash made from Allspice, water, sugar, and saltpeter is used to call good fortune to a home or business.

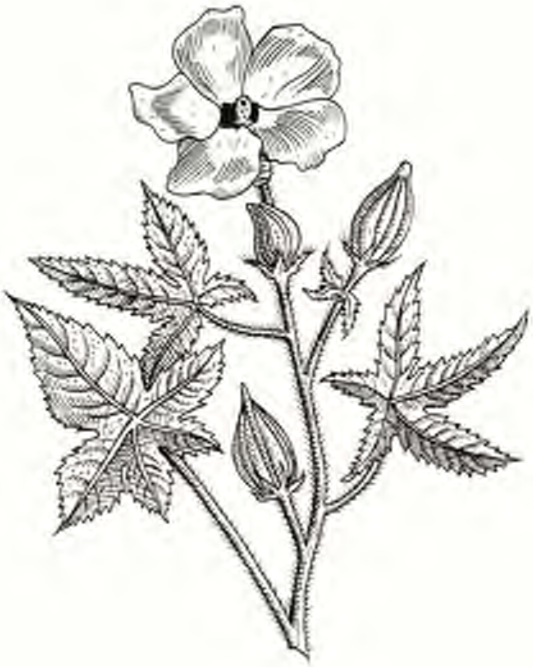
The Spirit-Retinue of Allspice

Candescence, Conjunction, Pleasure, Perpetuation, Wardship, Revival, Expansion, Gain, Inspiration, Succor, Autumnal Effulgence, Rustic Sainthood, and Returning Ghosts.

AMBRETTE

Abelmoschus moschatus
Malvaceæ (Mallow Family)

An annual or perennial herb, depending on climate, formerly classified as a Hibiscus, originating in India and now grown in diverse locales. It grows to 1.5 meters and is identified by its deeply-lobed palmate leaves and golden, purple-centered flowers. The fragrant brown seeds, nestled inside a pyramidal capsule, are kidney shaped. *Abelmoschus* is a small genus of twenty plants and includes the edible crop Okra (*A. esculentus*), which it resembles morphologically.



The power is concentrated in the precious seed, which yields an essential oil redolent of musk. The seed can be difficult to obtain in appreciable quantities; the practitioner is thus encouraged to foster living populations of the plant; some nurseries are able to special order starts in selected seasons, and seed merchants specializing in rarities should also be of assistance. Essential oil of the seed is infrequently available through aromatics suppliers of integrity.

In traditional medicine, it has been used for its qualities as an antispasmodic, aphrodisiac, nervine, and stimulant. True to the plant characteristics of the Mallow family, Ambrette is a soothing plant, used to ease indigestion and inflammations, as well as sweeten the breath. Ambrette seeds have been used as an aphrodisiac in traditional Arabian medicine, and it has also been used as a spice and flavoring for certain foods.

It is dually governed by the planetary influences of the Moon and Venus, and its principle occult use is for its power of Allure, and use in love-charms. The seed is smoldered in incense for its earthy allure of musk; it has, at times, been used as a substitute for animal-derived or synthetic musk, the former of which Ambrette sometimes adulterates in commerce. Of the plethora of natural musk substitutes, the essential oil of Ambrette is among the best, and when obtainable, is a most virtuous addition to perfumes of Allure. Recent research on *Abelmoschus manihot* has suggested mammalian aphrodisiac activity. In addition to its aromatic qualities, the plant produces copious quantities of a viscous mucilage, associated with the plant's occult powers of sexual attraction and virility, as well as possessing power against evil spirits.

AMMONIAC GUM

Ferula marmarica
Dorema ammoniacum
Apiaceæ (Dill Family)

IN occult botany, the substance known as Gum Ammoniac was an odorous, emetic gum resin used as an incense by the ancients and known to Dioscorides. It was called the *Gum of Ammon* because of the plant's proximity to the shrine of Jupiter-Ammon in Lybia. 'Ammoniac of Cyrenaica' was another name for the incense, although, as the substance has been used for thousands of years, Ammoniac is now thought to have been applied to several different, but related plants, with similar morphological and ethnobotanical characteristics. Similar species in Egypt and the Levant were anciently referred to as *Ushaq* or *Assiac*. As with many umbelliferous plants, the fragrant gum-resin exudate was collected from the flowering and fruiting stem, dried and used for suffumigation. In modern Morocco it is known as *Fashook* and is used as a household fumigation to expel noxious spirits. The gum is also documented as being widely used as a depilatory. Outside of Africa and selected Mediterranean trade routes, the resin can be quite difficult to obtain.

The Ammoniacum of medicine and pharmacy by contrast is generally treated as a separate species of plant, *Dorema ammoniacum*, a perennial herb growing to 2 meters, endemic to Iran, Iraq, and the Hindu Kush. It is thought that the ancient *Ushaq* originally referred to the Persian *Dorema ammoniacum* but was later applied by Arab writers to taxonomically related plants in North Africa that fulfilled a similar medicinal and magical function. In modern Ayruvedic medicine it is known by the name *Ushaka*.

The gum resin was much employed in ancient Persia as an agent of fumigation; its fragrance is stronger and more complex than the North African Gum Ammoniac, being acrid, resinous and evocative of Onion. The volatile oil expressed as a distillate increases the nauseous aspects of its odor; it contains ferulene, salicylic acid, and fouranocourmarins.

A traditional nervine in traditional Iranian medicine, specifically for memory enhancement and treatment of memory loss, the plant is now receiving a more respectful attention from science, particularly in relation to degenerative neural disorders such as Alzhemiers disease. Ammoniacum was formerly official in the pharmacopoeias of Britain, the United States, Germany and Switzerland. *Dorema* is a relatively small apiaceous genus, possessing 6–7 species, all producing a gum resin and ethnobotanically important. Some of these, such as that extracted from *D. aucheri*, have been demonstrated to possess antioxidant activity. The plant was used in Algerian folk magic as a means of dissipating evil spells.

CORRESPONDENCES
Powers: Oblation, Blessing, Protection, Warfare.
Planets: Mars, Saturn, Sun.
Element: Fire, Air.
Deific Forms: Ammon, Zeus, Mars.
Divine Appellation: Ushaq.
Virtue: Invincibility.
Body Part: Nervous System.
Medicament: Nervine.

AMBER

KNOWN by its archaic name *succinite*, Amber is a deep-golden petrified tree resin, mined chiefly in the modern era for jewelry and sold at great price. Worn by the ancient Romans as an apotropaic, Amber was famously excavated in Prussia and the Baltics. Deposits occur in many locales worldwide near coal beds and are often discovered during the process of sinking wells. Geologically, it is also associated with lignite and iron pyrites, and some amber contains fossilized insects.

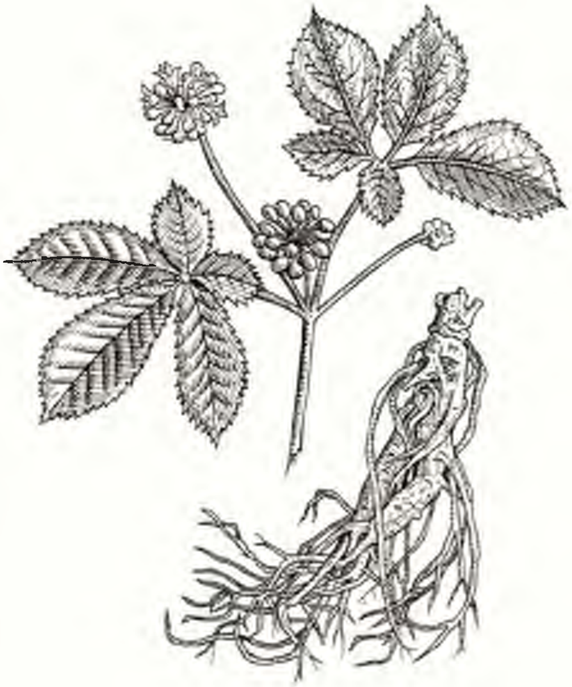
True Amber, though fossilized, is often flammable, as is freshly harvested tree resin. As such, and given its placement in the geological strata, it should properly be considered a fossil fuel. Its scent when burned, however, ranges from mildly pleasant to reprehensible. It is often the case that the æons responsible for petrifying the resin have also robbed it of almost all of its fragrant principles.

The aromatic 'Amber' of commerce is a perfume blend compounded of various fresh or matured tree resins and essential oils. This type has been produced in India for generations and is often a closely guarded family recipe. A common recipe for Amber uses various combinations of Sandalwood, tree resins, and essential oil of Rose. These formulations occasionally contain small amounts of crushed fossilized amber, though very little, due to its expense.

Certain sources claim a true 'essential oil' of Amber (*Oleum succinum* rct.) is available, but it is impossible to extract an essential oil—as the term is understood botanically—from fossilized resin. Thus, the 'Amber oils' offered as aromatics are chiefly comprised of a variety of other fragrant essential oils, sometimes with a modicum of crushed amber added. This does not mean, however, that Amber cannot be forced to yield up an oily exudate. Tests conducted on fossil resin show that when heated it combusts at 286° C. On distillation, it yields two initial principles: a yellow, acidic liquor, and, subsequent to this, a pale-yellow oil. At greater strength of rectification, it yields Oil of Amber or, in the old nomenclature, *Oleum succini*. As with most fossil fuels, distillation also yields a combustible gas which must be ventilated.

Some merchants sell 'Succinum,' the Latin name for Amber. This varies in form from what appears to be a crushed resin, to an oily, wax-like substance. The former variety varies in odor, and generally smells pleasing when burned; while the latter's fragrance is mild in its unburned state but producing an odious smell when burned.

To further complicate the matter, the word *Amber* is part of a technical nomenclature used to describe a spectrum of tree resin maturation. Its youthful polarity is *Resin*, denoting fresh material, the middle phase is *Copal*, a more mature form that has hardened but not fossilized. At the extreme end is *Amber*, which, by definition, is petrified.



AMERICAN GINSENG

Panax quinquefolium

Araliaceæ (Ginseng Family)

GARANTOQUEN, as it was originally called, holds a place of nobility among the plants of our North American pharmacopeia, strong in both medicine and magic. An herbaceous perennial found primarily in eastern deciduous forests, it ranges from the Ozarks and Appalachians northward into Ontario and Quebec. Low growing to a height of 50 cm, it has compound palmate leaves, pale umbel-like flowers, and red berries containing each of which a pair of seeds. Its pale, forked taproot can attain considerable size. Though having exceedingly strict requirements for culture, American Ginseng may be grown in the garden.

The herb is worthy of cultivation, and even moreso of protection in the wild. In the 1700s, the species was almost driven into extinction by a plague of Ginseng or 'Sang' hunters, in order to satisfy demand for export to China. The current state of the plant is considered vulnerable to extinction, due to poaching and degradation of its habitat by human encroachment. Procurement of the plant is best done by forming alliances with conservation groups and growers of good repute, or better yet, by growing the plant oneself.

The root is the portion most often used, but like most Araliaceæ, the berries also possess concentrated virtues. As a medicinal, it has been taken as an adaptogen, antidepressant, antidiabetic, antihypertensive, and antiulceritic diaphoretic. Amongst its many phytochemical constituents are triterpenoid saponins, oleanic acid, ginsenosides, polysaccharides, as well as fifteen amino acids.

Long acknowledged by native peoples for its powers of sharpening the mind, scientific research has initially been dismissive, then grudgingly accepting, of this virtue. In native medicine, Penobscot women employed an infusion of the root to increase fertility.

In planetary correspondence, it is in the first instance aligned to Jupiter, and second to Venus, these powers complimenting acting in mutual accord. Its powers as used in magical operations are Beneficence, Love, Attraction, Coercion, Success in Hunting, Protection from Nightmares, Longevity, Wealth, and Fertility.

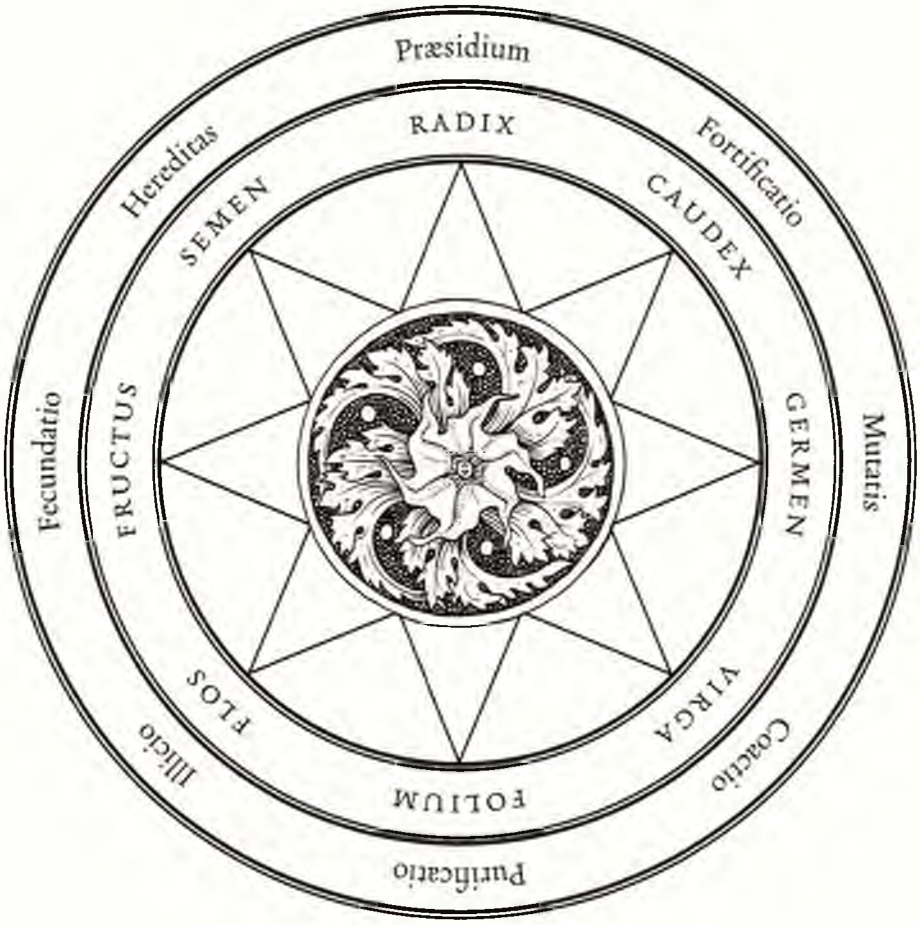
The principal uses of the plant's magical power were among Native American peoples; among whom it held a sovereign reputation as a love-medicine. The Ojibwa considered it to be of divine origin; lore relates that the herb was given to a youth in a trance-journey to the Chief of the Underworld. Meskwaki women made the plant into a compound to attract a husband; Pawnee men similarly used the root as a love charm. The Seminole considered American Ginseng a witchcraft medicine and employed it as a charm of compelling; the herb was rubbed on the body and clothes to reconcile with a divorced wife.

Among the Creek, the herb was used to keep ghosts and other noxious spirits at bay. One of the four sacred brews of the Creeks was *hilis hatki*, also known as White Medicine, was made from a decoction of American Ginseng, after having power blown into it by the priest.

Root of Garantoquen was also recognized as a potent talisman; the Chippewa carried bits in the pocket as a charm of good fortune. The Menominee used it in war and hunting bundles. The Penobscots also employed the root, whose form was given to resemble that of a human woman, for promoting female fertility.

The Spirit-Retinue of American Ginseng

Captivation, Provision, Prowess, Increase, Valiance, Excogitation, Figuration, Good Favor, Tempered Pungency, Quiet Dominion, Rubicund Exudation, Hot Pursuit, and Voluptuous Entreaty.



Of Plant Portions and their Powers

Of the varied ways in which plant virtues are accounted for their occult usage, morphology is an important consideration, and this borne out historically in herbal magic and folklore. The division of a plant into its constituent physical parts arises in nature as a function of specialization and adaptation. As with the bodies of woman and man, a plant is melothesic, embodying celestial, terrestrial, and infernal principles. Thus, as a collection of corporeal individuations, plant morphology is suggestive of diverse magical powers whose specifics are allied to botanical forms and functions.

Of the Greater Plant Portions.

THE ROOT

Anchored in Earth, and serving as the primary conduit of Water, the Root is naturally allied to those *elementa*, being at once dense and solid, but also excelling as an acquisitor of fluid. Its ever-spreading dendritic tendency—itself a mirror to the tree's upper crown—also aligns it with water, for even as the Root is sturdy, it is at once flexible and investigative. This dual sense of stability and plasticity is a critical key to its arcanum.

The Way of the Root, being the magical uses with which roots align, is thus one of foundation, stability, refuge and protection; its powers are First Dominion, being the primary point of procession and fixation of the plant. At the interface of root and soil, one often encounters the mycorrhizæ, colonies of fungi which are often symbiotic, but sometimes parasitic, to the host plant; this liminal zone further underscores the Root's function as a protector vis-à-vis the creation and enforcement of boundaries. Roots then, above all, are strongly protective, fortifying and stablilizing, and are thus allied to like forms of magic.

The Root is also aligned with the dead, and thereby corresponds to the arcanum of ancestry. Ever churning and penetrating the cadaver's final resting place, the root thrives in darkness, sequestered from solar radiance. It may thus be considered 'infernal', or aligned in a general sense with the underworld, as it makes its habitation in the subterranean realms. In doing so, it acquires the transformed matter of decomposed plant, animal and mineral bodies, and acquires something of their nature.

Roots generally possess aromatics suggestive of earth and soil, redolent of humic acids, minerals, organic matter and end-stage decomposition whereby 'the corpse becomes sweet'. They thus align strongly with elemental Earth and the magical preparations resonant with it: powders, oils, and of course carved fetishes, some traditional examples of which are simply clean, dry roots left in their natural forms. Others are carved into fantastic shapes, amuletic in function.

Also participating in the arcana of the Root are rhizomes, which are properly a kind of modified underground stem, examples of which include Ginger. These include tuberous bodies, such as that of Potato, Cyclamen or Oxalis and corms, such as that of Meadow Saffron (*Colchium* spp.).

Although all roots may be used in magical practices, certain species have accreted unique traditions due to the fascination they exert. Among these are Mandrake (*Mandragora* spp.), prized for its grotesque and semi-anthropomorphic form, as well as its complex of deliriant poisons.

THE STEM

The Stem or Trunk aligns anatomically with the human torso, being the central axis containing the vital organs. One of its chief arcana is the provision of architectural datum, being the primary axis from which the rest of the plant structure proceeds. In many plants, such as trees, this datum is vertical, but among others, such as the lianas or woody vines, it may be creeping, and of course it may also be multi-trunked, such as may be found in perennial herbs such as Oregano, or in trees such as Witch Hazel (*Hamamelis* spp.) The Stem or Caudex thus embodies a first organizing principle for the organism. In magic, it aligns with such virtues as Strength, Fortitude and Longevity, as well as the unifying principle of centrality.

THE BUD

The Bud, that plant portion so jealously protected by orchardists, represents vast potentiality held in reserve. Simply considered, it comprises a dormant shoot. A more complex understanding of the Bud extends to include the apical meristem: in plants, it is the tissue which may develop into any number of plant parts, such as leaves and flowers, and is found at places in the plant where growth takes place. Differentiation occurs due to growing environment, season, life cycle, and also in response to wounding. In human anatomy, it corresponds to what are called 'stem cells'. Being the very life and adaptability of the plant, but also its potentials, the magical arcana of the Bud relate to Vivification, Potentiality, Adaption, Resurrection and Shape-changing. The bud may also be understoof to relate to such esoteric principles as the Divine Androgyne, the entity of gender unique, but participating in all others.

THE BRANCH

The essence of the Branch is differentiation, a perpetual bifurcation into differing routes, ways, and states of being. Its human anatomical corollary are the legs and arms, hence their colloquial designation 'limbs'. In both human and plant, they are the adventitious will of the Trunk, put forth as mediators in the spaces beyond it.

As the masters of differing routes, branches define the path, whether straight or crooked, and on it claim dominion. In this latter aspect, they become emblems of power, wielded as the rod of the magician, the scepter of the King, and the club of the Wild-Man. The Branch is thus allied with the concept of Mastery, and it is magical powers are Commanding and Compelling. We consider such examples as the Rod of Aaron, the Caduceus of Hermes, and the Blasting Rod of the magician and cunning-man. In the modern occult tradition of Sabbatic Witchcraft, magical rods or branches may be either straight and crooked, the latter being aligned with more indirect and wide-wending routes of sorcery. Aside from its manifestation as the Staff, the branch is also used as the Wand, its smaller counterpart used for more specific magical usages of Conduction.

The Branch may also be used for rousing, or the power of Excitation. The old British custom of beating the bounds with a switch or *withe* is one example of this, being a kind of 'awakening' of the presiding spirits of plot lines and boundary-markers.

Branches may also be used for ritual scourging or flagellation, their magical virtue arising as an aid to circulation by transference of power to the bare skin. When used in this manner, branches of various species can be used depending on the nature of the rite. Trees with relatively soft leaves, such as Birch, can be used for erotic rites, whereas branches possessing prickly leaves such as Holly are valued for rites of catharsis, goading and exorcism.

Wood, also being derived both from the trunk, is also an important material aspect of the Branch, used for the substance of magical artifact. The advantage of using wood taken from branches allows one to harvest without killing the tree, and where fruit wood is sought, this can be done in conjunction with routine tree health maintenance.

THE LEAF

In human anatomy, the Leaf is aligned with the hand, and its corresponding sphere of *work*. The work so embodied consists of gathering light (and also water and nutrients through foliar feeding), into the plant and transforming it for its bodily homeostasis. The work thus performed by leaves is three-fold: photosynthesis, evapotranspiration, and nutrient intake. Some leaves do in fact assume hand-like shapes, this designation referred to as *palmate*, and in Christian folk traditions such leaves are considered beneficent helpers, bearing the power of the *Palma Christi* or Hand of Christ.

In ritual, leaves are esoterically aligned with Work, Increase, Creativity and Force. Where leaves are strongly fragrant, they are also used for Exorcism, such as Camphor (*Cinnamomum camphora*), Sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*), and Turpentine Weed (*Trichostemma lanceolata*). Fragrant leaves are also used for the magical act of Strewing, and in many traditions, for infusions used for initiatory or healing baths.

THE FLOWER

Erotomorphic and engaging the senses, the Flower corresponds to the genitals of animal anatomy, as it serves primarily as the sexual organ of the plant. As such, it fulfils a number of functions, from the attraction of various pollinators, to the conception and development of fruits and seeds by way of the ripening ovary. Fittingly, the Flower has become associated with romance and courtship, but also funerals. The esoteric principles embodied in the Flower are Allure, Attraction, and Illusion, and they excel for magical operations relating to sexual emanation and promiscuity, but also love. With blossoms, it is important to be mindful that display may take on forms other than visual appearance—flowers may offer aromatic strategies to various pollinators or offer nectar as rewards for various types of insect behavior. Many of the nectar guides appearing on flower petals are in fact invisible to the human eye and can only be seen by certain insects.

THE FRUIT

The natural powers of the Fruit are sustenance, provision, and the completion or consummation of labor. Borne as a ripened ovary, they bear a unique resonance with the qualities of motherhood. As a plant portion, fruits also are emblematic of the power of Fertility, being the proof of an organism's potentials to produce progeny, and pass on its power to a new generation. Fruits embody Success, Sweetness and Reward, as well as Brightness, Allure, and Temptation—sometimes deadly. The Fruit also represents a wholeness or *entirety*—an arcanum bound as one, from the erotic impetus governing conception, to birth, growth, maturation and fertility.

In magic and religious ritual, Fruits also serve as the matter of sacrifice. This is epitomized in wine and the art of the vintner, which embodies the arcana of the Resurrection, by which a body is crushed, bled, and sealed in an endarkened tomb for a time, then brought forth anew in a wholly transformed and powerful body.

THE SEED

The Way of the Seed embraces both Fertility and Progeny. As such, it is the bearer of heredity, or bloodline, being the traits and characteristics passed from preceding generations. The magical and ritual functions of the Seed is often that of Fertility, or sexual rites.

Their frequent state of multiplicity, as with very tiny seeds, such as Poppy, often leads to their being a feature of *scattering charms*: spells utilizing seeds cast forth from the hand, either to "sow" power of various kinds, or to confuse evil spirits who will become preoccupied with counting them.

An additional magical power of the Seed is 'ensoulment', being an embryonic enclosure for a unique individual. As such it resonates with the Divine Protoplast. In plant lore, as 'latent souls,' seeds possess the capacity to speak, as ingressing ghosts, hence their usage in various forms as tools of divination.

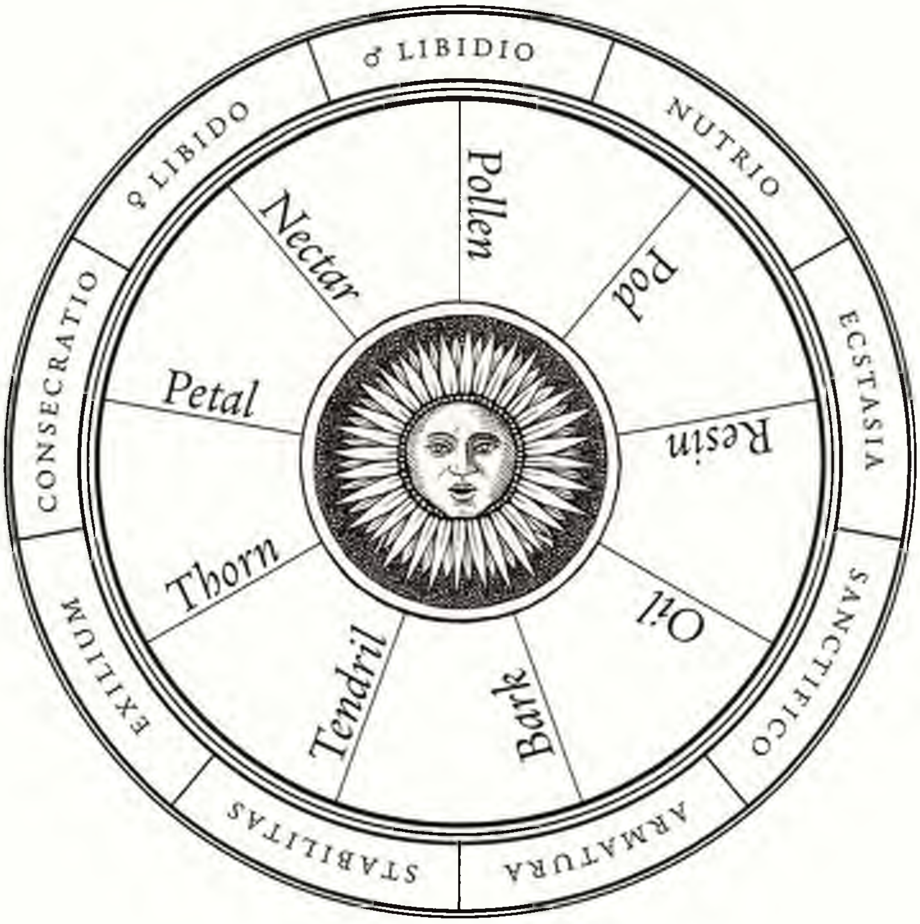
Of the Lesser Plant Portions.

THE BARK

Hardened and hoary, the Bark offers up the rough mantle of form against the elements and those who behold the tree. Sheathing the Root, Trunk, and Stem, it is a complex weaving of tissues which as a whole is known as the Periderm. In human anatomy, it corresponds to keratin-bearing tissues such as hair and nails, and also the *hide* or epidermis. Its chief magical function is Protection, but also Masking, or the presentation of exterior appearance.

THE TENDRIL

The Tendril is a modified stem or leaf, primarily adapted for stabilization of the plant and acquisition of space. Its esoteric virtues as a plant-portion are Stabilization, Infiltration, Acquisition, and Binding. Serving as a kind of



botanical 'scout', its curls are both investigative and expansive, seeking solid structures to support the plant. As an embodied botanical strategy, the Way of the Tendril is exemplified by such plants as Field Bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*) and the various exemplars of Strangler Figs (*Ficus* spp.). The 'holdfasts' for which various forms of Ivy (*Hedera* spp.) are notorious also participate in the arcanum of the Tendril.

THE THORN

Thorns are specialized leaves that have been adapted as protective structures by plants, most frequently against grazing animals. Some thorns, such as those of *Acacia*, *Robinia*, and *Crataegus* species, can possess very hard wood and attain great lengths. When harvested and dried, these thorns are used ritually for magical operations of Warfare, Fixation, and Cursing, by which an enemy is punctured, drained of vitality and physically immobilized. Historically, the means by which thorns were used varied considerably, but common methods were piercing doll-fetishes made to represent the victim, or contriving the *witch-bottle*, made by filling a bottle with urine, pins, thorns, and a lock of the victim's hair. Special mention must be made of the spines of the cactus genus *Opuntia*, native to the Americas, which presents the practitioner a vast array of instruments of damnation.

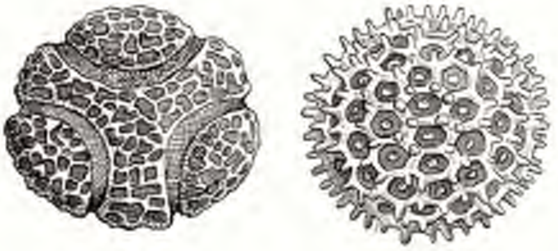
THE PETAL

Fresh or dried, flower petals are an etheric extension of the Flower, often being its most visible part, and frequently the concentrators of its fragrance. They are used for Consecration, and for love-magic. Frequently, they are strewn to confer blessing, or to hallow ceremonial ground. Some petals, such as those of Rose, may be dried and retain both their color and fragrance.

NECTAR

Contained within the flower, Nectar is a sweet liquid secreted to attract birds, butterflies, moths, and other pollinators. Its esoteric function relates primarily to female sexuality and libido, and the power of enticement. Nectar also has nutritive and aromatic functions and may be used for strategies of defense as well as attraction.

Given its function of attraction, Nectar is allied with the planetary power of Venus, yet this is not its only botanical role. Nectar is used to build relationships with insects and other animals, sometimes as a tithe for the protection they afford from predators. It is therefore aligned with Venus' power of building relationships.



POLLEN

Given its biological function, Pollen relates to male sexuality on both a material level and that of the immaterial (magical). In considering the sexual aspects of the plant realm, plant mystic Stephen Harrod Buhner has rightly compared male ejaculation and fertilization with plant pollination. Accordingly, it is aligned with the male libido and sexual drive.

Pollen allergy, a major cause of 'hay fever' is in fact the result of millions of airborne grains seeking a favorable reproductive outcome. The brutalization of the sinus cavity and allied mucus membranes is accorded a contemplative if colorful dimension when viewing Pollen grains under the electron microscope: many have spiky shapes reminiscent of medieval maces and war-clubs. Pollen may also be used for defensive magic, a quality it shares with nectar.

Pollen further conveys blessing and bounty, aspects of fertility and procreation, and is so used ritually in a number of Native American ceremonies. A common pollen source is Maize, but other plants such as Cattail (*Typha*) are also used. Pollen may also be used in varied nutritive and intoxicating preparations, or distilled into a spirit, as is sometimes done with Pollen of Fennel.

THE PROTHALLUS

Overlapping the Lesser Portions of the Nectar and Pollen we may consider the *Prothallus*. In some plants, such as ferns, this gametophyte generates the sexual organs of both female (archegonium) and male (antheridium). This plant portion is aligned with the arcanum of the dually-sexed, being the Divine Androgyne as manifest in such ancient deific forms as the Greek Hermaphroditus, or as appearing in such esoteric traditions as Alchemy. Inasmuch as it represents division into two, it also embodies communion of bodies, and the unique state of power generated by Union.

THE SEEDPOD

The chief biological function of the Pod or Capsule is the protection of seeds within. Its human anatomical correspondence is the ovarian cortex in females, and the scrotum in males. Naturally, such pods also align with concerns of fertility and sexuality, representing fecund swellings, erotic turgidity, and concentration of virile power, both male and female. Beyond this, the Seedpod serves a warding function, and is useful in magic operations for Protection, sustenance and nurturance.

Hardier Seedpod types may also be used in ritually for their power of containment, whether as a home for transient familiar spirits, or as a means of containing demons or troublesome entities. The type example for this usage is the bottle gourd (*Lagenaria* spp.), which can attain a hard wood-like tissue, and offers voluminous space and an attractive shape. However, all types of Seedpods may be used according to need and ingenuity, ranging from the diverse pods of *Eucalyptus* spp. to the profusely-cavitated Seedpod of the Sacred Lotus (*Nelumbo nucifera*).

THE SAP, OR RESIN

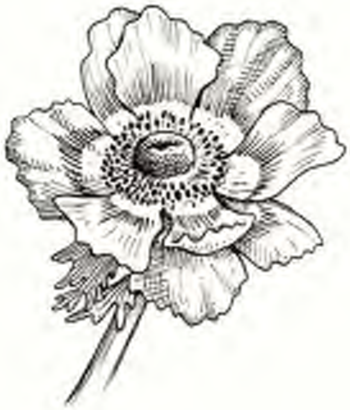
Sap is the thick, often resin-bearing, liquid found in trees and some plants. Its human anatomical corollary is blood. Magically, it used for Sacrifice, Summoning, Intoxication, Nutriment, Defense, and Exorcism—also following the general magical uses of blood.

In deciduous trees, the Sap is often a gum, or hydrocolloid, and in some trees such as Maple and Birch, possesses considerable amounts of sugar. The Sap of evergreen or coniferous trees is also called resin and is often used in magical and religion as incense, its fragrance arising from a complex chemistry. Like human blood, it contains powerful components of the tree's immune system, often antiseptic, that assist in preventing or arresting infection. Also like blood, it contains principles which close wounds, both on the tree and on humans.

THE OIL

Essential oils are extracted from all plant parts, from roots to seeds. Their intense and complex fragrances have certainly been prized since the dawn of human-plant interaction, but their extraction as a rarefied plant portion is of more recent vintage, and their ascendancy as a major industry is even more recent. It is a general rule—though there are exceptions—that a plant's 'scent', as perceived by the human olfactory sense, is primarily due to this oily fraction. In human anatomy, the Oil corresponds to sebaceous secretions, pheromones, and microbiota-derived scent.

The natural magical operation associated with Oil is anointing, which in some magical traditions and religions is considered a ritual action of the highest and most sacred significance. In many, it constitutes an act of Sacrifice; in some, it confers kingship. Essential oils have a broad spectrum of magical use.



ANEMONE

Anemone spp.

Ranunculaceæ (Buttercup Family)

ANEMONE is a perennial herb growing to 30 cm high, having palmate and divided leaves, a slender, creeping rhizome, and handsome flowers of various colors. All of the approximately 120 species of Anemone contain powerful plant toxins. Its many common names include Nimbleweed, Crowfoot, Indian Balm, Windflower, Little Wind Rose, and Blood-Drops-of-Christ.

Many cultures regard the herb with loathing, and it is often an omen of death or disease; among the Chinese, for example, the Wood Anemone (*A. nemorosa*) is known as 'Flower of Death.' This same plant, in ancient Europe, was regarded as a habitat for fairies, also frequently associated with death, mischief, and the underworld. Because of its propensity to provoke dermatitis, Anemone is often ascribed the planetary resonance of Mars.

The ancient Romans used some species of Anemone as a magical charm against fever. In ancient Greek magic, Anemone kept in the home, or on the person, was a talisman to prevent illness. The Romans also heaped the flowers upon the altar of Venus, considered its deific patroness, as well as planetary governor with Mars.

Among the Ponca tribes of North America, one species, *Anemone cylindrica*, was esteemed as a sovereign gambling talisman, especially for card games. The woolly fruits were smoldered over a fire, and the gamblers passed their hands through the arising smoke, rubbing as they did to empower the palms—and so guide the game.

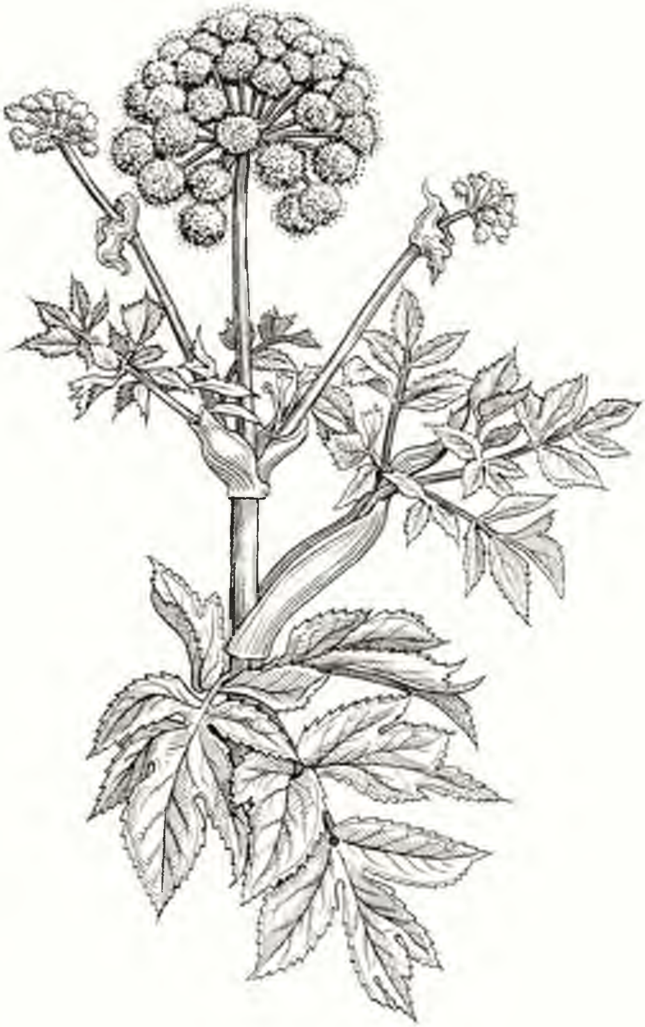
In German plant lore, it is one of the celebrated 'Spring Flowers' (*Frühlingsblumen*), botanical charms prized for the prevention of disease: the first three flowers of Anemone one sees in the spring are eaten as magical protection against fevers and other ailments.

Like many of the Buttercup family, Anemone is a strong rubefacient and vesicatory. In traditional and magical medicine, it has been used to remove swellings, wens, corns on the feet, and other unsightly growths and so-called 'proud flesh.' In North America, *Anemone candensis*, known as Little Buffalo Medicine, was employed medicinally among the Omaha as well as the Ponca.

Anemone is an impressive skin irritant and can cause severe inflammation. Ranunculin, a toxic glycoside, is the principle organic venom, and by the enzyme ranunculase gives rise to protoanaemonene, another toxin. Internal consumption of large amounts of the plant or its extract can be fatal.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF ANEMONE

Prurience, Magnetism, Inclination, Dictation, Cozening, Connivance, Harangue, Pricklings, Hives, Restriction, Decortication, Bitter Repulsion, and Inflamed Desire.



ANGELICA

Angelica archangelica
Angelica spp.
Apiaceæ (Dill Family)

GREAT High Angelica, as it was once known, is an herb much cultivated in gardens, stately of form, with glossy leaves, hollow stalks and pale umbels, and attaining up to three meters in height. Native to Europe, North America, and Siberia, it is a majestic herb of strong Solar affinity, and a presence in the garden truly evocative of its namesake, due to its height, spread, and profusion of white or golden flower discs. In cultivation, certain species such as *A. gigas* attract beneficial insects such as lacewings. *Angelica* is a diverse genus populated by some 60 species, which, though varying in size and coloration, possess remarkably similar magical characteristics. Folk-names testify to a rich battery of magical and ceremonial power: Archangel, Hunting Root, and Root of the Holy Ghost.

In physic it is a digestive, circulatory and cardiac tonic. For nervous headache, tea brewed from the root is efficacious, and a helper for weak digestion; an infusion may be drunk as desired. The leaves may also be used in infusion as a throat gargle, and tea from the same has been taken for flatulence and heartburn. The ancients regarded Angelica as a potent theriac, and it commonly appears in a variety of apothecary's mithridatic formulations. Chinese Angelica or Dong Quai (*A. sinensis*) is used to boost circulatory vigor, or 'move blood,' though the Chinese use a multitude of *Angelica* species in addition to this one. Some species are favored ingredients in sexual tonics, for the nourishment of erectile tissue.

The root, stem, seed, and gum all possess medicinal and magical virtue, in addition to their essential oils. The musk-scented gum is used in fragrances and magical perfumes; roots and seeds are used to flavor liqueurs, as well as being a minor, but crucial, ingredient in Absinthe. Gum is collected in the springtime, from incisions made in the crown and root. If the root, rather than the gum, is what you seek, it should be dug, cleaned, then dried with haste, using ample air circulation; the thickest roots should be sliced to better facilitate their preservation. Once thoroughly dried, these will retain their virtues for years if stored properly.

The herb is prized in European herbalist traditions, but it is in North America where the great storehouse of this plant's magical power has been most thoroughly recognized and accessed from a ritual standpoint. Among Native American peoples, the root of various Angelica species has enjoyed a broad reputation for magical power, not unlike the Mandrake of Europe. Though its name and surface morphology suggest an angelic, rather than diabolic character, the plant did possess a reputation for cursing among the Iroquois, and was esteemed as a poison. Such were the virtues of *A. atropurpurea*, the Purple-stemmed Angelica, which also yielded a potent infusion for purifying a house from the infectious influence of ghosts.

The Spirit-Retinue of Angelica

Magnamanity, Exudation, Foison, Profusion, Windfall, Ferocity, Restitution, Retribution, Aversion, Provocation, Fiery Vivification, Righteous Indignation, and Glorious Triumph.

Like Mandrake, the root was used magically as a source of initiatory power, whether individual or collective. Owing to its hardness and density, the dried root can be carved into fetishes, mommets, and grotesque forms, and many species have fragrant roots whose aroma persists over time or even becomes more intense. Other widespread magical uses in North America were for success in gambling, controlling horses, and as a talisman for repelling snakes. As with its European cousins, North American *Angelica* species were valued as strong anti-witchcraft plants.

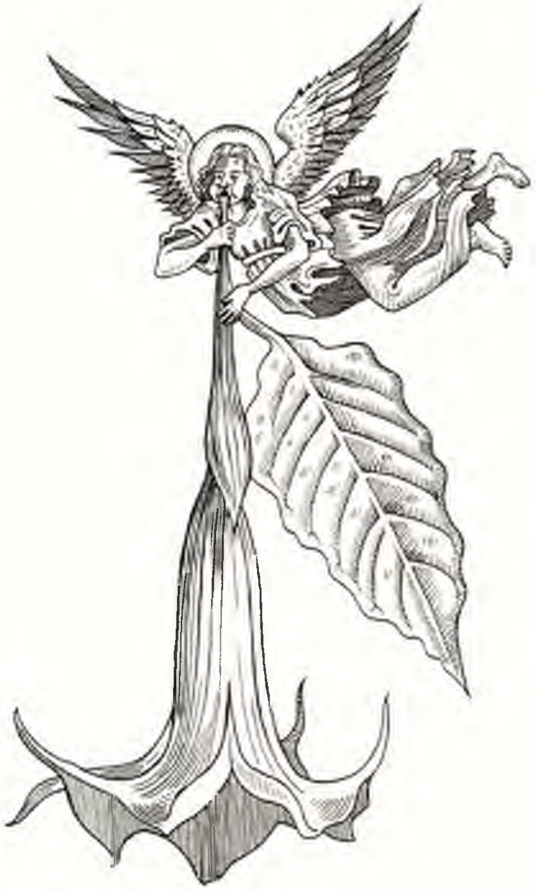
Yellow Angelica was also used by the Blackfoot as a charm of malevolence and controlling others. Roots of *Angelica tomentosa* were used magically by the Karok as protection from noxious spirits; the Kashaya Pomo called the plant *ba'cowa* and employed it as a powerful spiritual medicine: hung in the home, the root provided protection; shavings of the root were smoldered by shamans while curing. Pieces of the root are also carried on the person as protective talismans.

In Eastern Europe, there are records which describe a rite whereby Angelica plants to be sold were carried into town to the accompaniment of chanting, suggesting ancient magical veneration of the plant. In Polish and Ukranian folk magical traditions, *Angelica sylvestris* was carried as a talisman to avert evil spirits.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Beneficence, Banishing, House Ward, Hunting, Success in Gambling, Ward Against Noxious Spirits, Protection in Childbirth, Wealth, and Cursing.
Planets: Sun.
Element: Fire.
Deific Forms: *Angeloi.*
Divine Appellation: Holy Ghost Root.
Alchemical Concept: Aniadum.
Virtue: Fortitude.
Body Part: Heart.
Medicine: Stimulant, Nervine, Antispasmodic, Digestive

Affliction: Photodermatitis.
Poison: Furanocoumarins.
Eponymous Compounds: Angelicin—$C_{11}H_6O_3$.
Emblem: Amidst a green meadow, a golden crown forms a magic circle: a priestess stands within, holding a scroll of wisdom.



ANGEL’S TRUMPET

Brugmansia spp.
Solanaceæ (Nightshade Family)

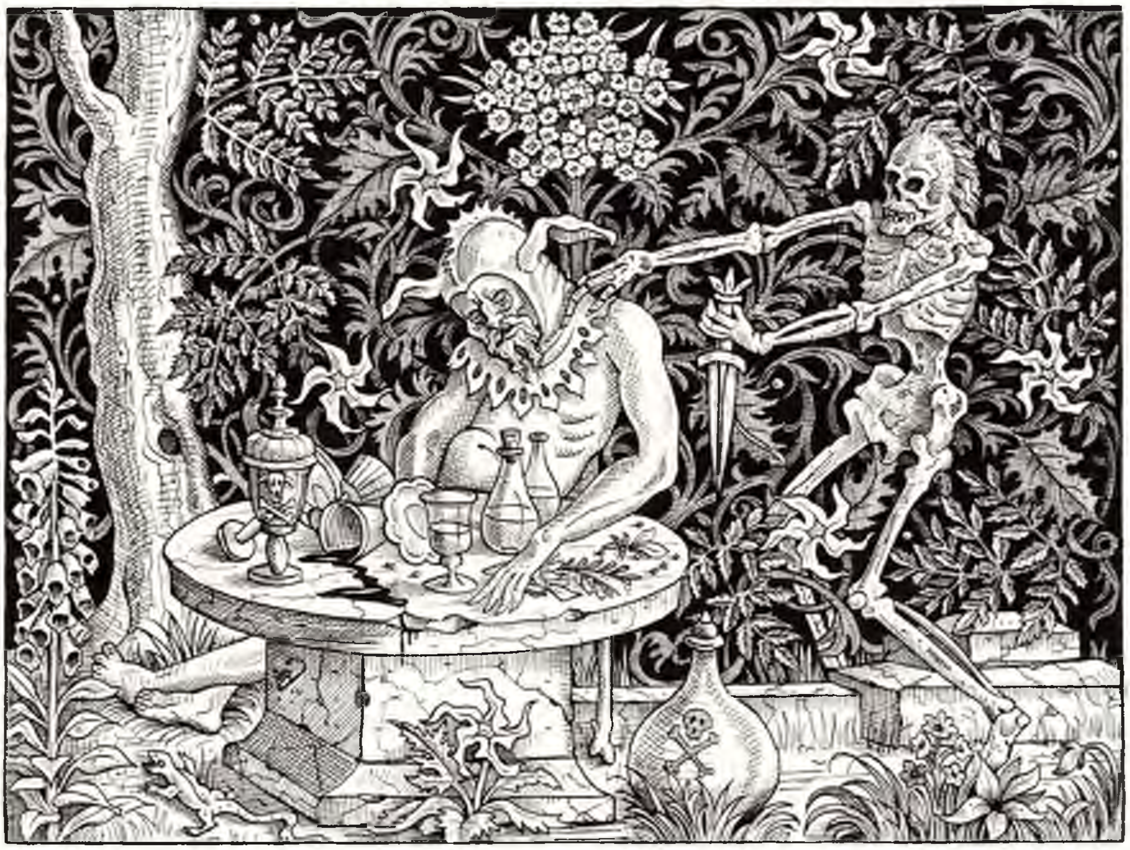
A SMALL alkaloid-rich tree with large, rank-smelling leaves and nodding, trumpet-shaped flowers, known as much for their enticing perfume as their lascivious shape. The Trumpet bears a colorful array of traditional names, including Toa, Floripondio, Florifundio, and Yerba de Huaca; *Brugmansia sanguinea* is still known by some indigenous Peruvians as Huacachaca (Plant of the Tomb), because of its magical ability to reveal ancient treasures and graves. In Colombia, Angel’s Trumpets are collectively known as *Borracheras*, the name invoking their powers of stupefaction. In magical and ceremonial tradition, its constellation of magical virtues includes Revelation, Divination, Healing, and Oneirogenesis. Angels Trumpets are also strongly associated with love charms and magic. The aroma of the flower has been used to induce dreaming and the fresh flowers are placed by the bedside for this purpose.

Among those disrespectful of its poison, the tree has a reputation for inducing dissociative psychosis, psychiatric hospitalization, injury and death. According to the *Entheogen Review* (5:1), abuse of the plant by ignorant American youths led the city council of one Florida town to outlaw new plantings of *Brugmansia* × *candida*; no less than 112 hospitalizations for poisoning occurred locally in 1994.

Formerly classed by botanists as ‘Tree Daturas’, these arboreal nightshades are grown as ornamentals in tropical, subtropical, and Mediterranean-climate regions. Some *Brugmansia* species can reach a height of 9 meters; many thrive in the warmer regions of the United States. The plant is an ancient cultigen, largely having lost its ability to reproduce in the wild, testifying to centuries of magical and medicinal use. In folk medicine, it is esteemed for treatment of chills, fever, and swollen joints, and like its similarly potent cousin Tobacco, fresh leaves of Angel’s Trumpet may be applied topically to minor wounds, abrasions, and burns.

Biochemistry varies by species, and by strain, but is always a dark admixture of tropane alkaloids, primarily scopolamine and hyoscyamine. Concentration of the poison occurs in the stems, leaves, flowers, and seeds, and in the root to a lesser degree. In indigenous contexts, traditional use of the plant employs the powdered seeds in powerful brews: physical consequences of dose and overdose consist initially of confusion, followed by stupor, trance or violent convulsions. This gives rise to narcosis or sleep lasting up to four days, intermittently mingled with the appearance of spirits, gods, phantasms, and shades of the Dead.

> *It is asserted by Shamans that in small quantities, it gives strength, beginning by cooking three pairs of leaves or one flower, one progresses to larger dosages with time and in this form it serves to make divination, diagnosis, and witchcraft.*
>
> T. E. LOCKWOOD



ASLEEP IN THE GARDEN OF RECKONING

Among indigenous South American peoples there is evidence of the plant in rites of passage for men, similar in certain ways to the use of the closely-related *Datura* or Thorn-Apple species of the northern hemisphere. At one stage of such initiations *Brugmansia* potions were administered rectally to the initiates until a coma or visionary sleep resulted, wherein spirits of the ancestors appeared to give guidance to the boy for his new life as a man.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF ANGEL'S TRUMPET

Prognostication, Transmission, Adumbration, Illusion, Demonianism, Promiscuity, Stupefaction, Harshness, Violation, Dessication, Bestial Ravishment, Loud Proclamations, and Transformed Flesh.

In the Sibundoy Valley of Colombia, the Trumpet was used for divination, prophecy, therapy, and learning witchcraft. Elsewhere in South America, *B. sanguinea*, the Bloody Angel's Trumpet, was employed for *Tonga*, a narcotic philter imbibed by priests of the Temple of the Sun at Sogamoza. In other traditions, the plant was ingested to reveal treasures concealed in ancient graves. Among the Ecuadorean Jivaro, misbehaving children were sometimes given decoctions of the seed of *B. sanguinea* and parched Maize, so that the spirits of the ancestors would visit and rebuke them.

The Angel's Trumpet emblematizes a seldom-discussed principle of prophecy: true revelation is often unpleasant, a cataclysmic event which wreaks havoc upon mind and body, as well as previously-held conceptions. To the fool, the beauty of its flower belies the potential horror of its attendant spirits, a paradox like that borne by the geometric oddity of Gabriel's Horn, with its finite volume and infinite surface area. Such is the relation between its exterior and interior forms, and what each reveals.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Revelation, Allure, and Love-Charm.
Planets: Saturn and Venus.
Element: Fire.
Patron Spirits: animal spirits of the wild; also, revelatory Angels, both fallen and exalted.
Divine Appellation: Plant of the Tomb.
Virtue: Apokalypsis.

Body Part: Dreaming Body.
Therapeutic: Revelation.
Affliction: Confirmation Bias.
Poison: Narcotic, Anticholinergic.
Emblem: A war-trumpet emerging from billowing clouds, with a spirit-horde swarming out from its bell.

The Phármakon and the Fool

IT is axiomatic that certain plants, due to their 'forbidden' natures and otherworldly mystiques, will always attract the imprudent. Such herbs are allied to the *phármakon* of the ancient Greeks, encompassing the concepts of poison, remedy, and magic. When considering this attraction and the behaviors exhibited in the dynamic, such plants have their crude spiritual analogues in the demonic retinues of various systems of 'black magic'. Those who flock to them heedlessly, as insects to Sundews, participate in the Arena of the Fool, a fallow ditch bordering the pathway of the spiritual seeker.

When rave culture was at its height on the west coast of the United States, I overheard a conversation in an herbalist's shop, a place I paid a yearly visit to in order to obtain certain elusive plant materials. Part braggadocio, part carnival-barker boister, the male voice carried with it a certain swagger, as if the words spoken were insufficient to convey authority, and some type of extra vocal polish was needed. Looking up, I recognized the young man behind the counter as a fixture of the regional by-ways of ceremonial magic, a pretender to Thelemic mysticism and conjuring the Goetic spirits.

The essence of his boast concerned his 'knowledge' of Monkshood (*Aconitum* spp.), presumably in order to impress a young woman. When the transaction with his obviously unimpressed customer had concluded, I approached and asked him if he knew much about the historical usage of Monkshood in compounding the witches' flying ointment, a topic which occupied much of my study at the time. Somewhat dismissively, he replied that had never heard of it. I briefly shared a few of the medieval reports of the forbidden black grease, potentiated with deadly plants such as Monkshood and Poison Hemlock, which, when rubbed on the body, transported witches to their diabolical Sabbat. His immediate reply was to exclaim with conviction that the ointment would be "great to use at a rave."

On its surface, the late 20th century phenomenon of the rave does in fact share similarities to the witches' Sabbat: loud music, dancing, a loosening of inhibition, and a peculiar ecstatic quality of 'loss of self' amid the mass sensory derangement. However, it was not linkage of these two events that gave me pause, but rather his flippant and presumptive approach to a plant which, in the correct dosages, had provided sure death to enemies for centuries, in the hands of skilled criminal poisoners. I remarked that β-Endorphin, as well as spirited dancing to summon it up, were superior psychoactives for a rave, and that he also be sure to drink plenty of water. The suggestion was not received well; sometime later, I learned that he and some of his associates had become the victims of his own occult experiments gone awry.

The Arena of the Fool, though frustrating for some, is an essential organ of the body of occult wisdom. Like carnivorous plants such as *Nepenthes*, it often serves to trap and digest the detritus of the path. Through the result of an alimentary process, it seeks to sort the useful from the extraneous, or to liberate the light (power) from the spiritual excrement in which it is trapped in. It also yields a wealth of teachings, from which the attentive can learn a great deal. As the Green Mysteries are concerned, and particularly those plants of dangerous character, the essential work of the seeker is in recognizing the Arena of the Fool *before* one enters it. Here, at the threshold of dissolution, certain essential questions are applicable:

Am I paying attention?

In any situation bearing risk, it is the crucial question. Pay attention, not only to the voices of authorities, but to what the plant has to say to you directly —fair or foul. Pay attention, not only to the saints and mystics who supped at the table of the gods, but to the dead bodies of those who attempted it without table manners.

Is respect present?

The 'respect' in question is manifold, and begins with oneself and the plant, but also those spiritual and medicinal traditions that have historically attended upon it. Though deeply embedded in 'superstition', a long-held plant taboo might conceal very real concerns about lethality. Likewise, a plant's powers will express themselves in an entirely different manner once removed from its cultural context. A further point of consideration is the understanding of a plant's spectrum of powers, and the limitations of one's own flesh: no matter how great one's personal power, there are always entities more powerful than oneself.

What is the nature of the impulse?

Of necessity, the query addresses the phenomenon of temptation. It also hearkens to learning, either within an established school or tradition, and also from direct experience. Further, it invokes the critically endangered virtue of common sense. From apprehending the impulse, we gain greater *vista* of Self, and that which lies beyond. Knowing these things, we avoid an enforced timidity and the fostering of cowardice, but also wisely look to Icarus and his great bequest.

Wherefore ego?

What action serves the pursuit of knowledge, and what is unconscious reflex, serving to augment perception of you by others? Does knowledge also require its loud proclamation? Can you, the herbalist, dress a serious wound such that it heals expediently and with tissue integrity? If so, is the act of healing sufficient, or must it also be boasted of to actually be considered knowledge?

* * *

Admittedly, some important teachings are generated of missteps, conscious or otherwise, which reside within the Arena of the Fool. We are admonished that the condition of being human is not the same as infallibility, and upon the path of knowledge we are encouraged to stumble; one can only hope that such 'lessons' form the substrate of wisdom.

However, when considering soteriological rationales for deviation, whether it be the mis-step of the rebel or the blunderer, there are limits. This is particularly applicable to poisonous plants, some of which exhibit remarkably firm thresholds. Ingestion of the Death Cap mushroom *Amanita phalloides* presents certain assuredly morbid signposts: mass organ-failure is, for example, an indubitable sign that the Rubicon has been crossed.

The behavior of the fool undoubtedly exists on a spectrum, and predictably walks hand in hand with a civilized hypocrisy. We may abhor the squalor of drunkenness but cannot dismiss the sacrality of the Bacchic Oracle—even if it is not our particular fancy. Hedging our bets, we drink unmixed wine from the cup carved of Ivy-wood, trusting that the god of intoxication will somehow protect us from 'excess'. In seeking to avoid the Arena of the Fool, one can wander into its very heart.

Taking the counsel of the Fates, we may gain clarity and perspective in this matter by recognition of recurrent patterns. Some fools, those we know as imbeciles, may only be decisively 'taught' by Death itself. Others, those rare favorites in the courts of the gods, perpetually dance with it. For all else, the fool is a hypostasis, a phase-state of spirit: with sincere application of the principles of the Arena, it just might give way, in its season, to the estate of the Sage.

ANISE

Pimpinella anisum

Apiaceæ (Dill Family)

AN annual herb reaching one meter in height, native to the Mediterranean, with white flowers and fragrant seeds. The seed and its essential oil are the most utilized portions of the plant. It is used in herbal medicine for its virtues as an antiseptic, antispasmodic, carminative, galactagogue, stimulant, and stomachic: a number of digestion-stimulating cordials make use of the seed; alcoholic drinks such as the Turkish *raki* also employ it. Anise was a valued aromatic in the perfumes and unguents of the ancient Near East. Iranian folk medicine used smoldered seeds to treat vertigo. Known in Egypt and Old Akkad, where is was entreated by the name *samrânu.*

The essential oil contains considerable amounts of trans-anethole ($C_{10}H_{12}O$) which in large doses is a narcotic and may precipitate brain complications, in addition to its action as a dermal irritant. Also present are anethole, eugenol, methyl chavicol, and estragole and coumarins. When the oil—rather than unprocessed portions of the herb—is to be used, the virtue of prudence is advised.

> *Of the Anise seed they say, being eaten at the hour, when that they shall sleep, it does make a pleasant, and delectable dream.*
>
> NICHOLAS MONARDES
>
> *Joyfull Newes of the Newe Founde Worlde*, 1577

In planetary herbal correspondence, Anise is aligned with both Jupiter and Venus. Its virtues in the magical art are Wealth, Divination, Summoning, Love-charms, and Protection from Fascination. In Afro-Brazilian tradition, Anise is sacred to the orixa Oshun, she of the fresh waters, wealth, love, and sensuality. Its use for spiritual power accordingly magnifies those attributes.

In the old traditions of Welsh fairy-medicine, the famed doctors of Myddfai used a potion to bolster seminal vigor made from powdered Anise seeds and leaves of Pennyroyal, served to the afflicted in "soup or sauce."

The Leyden Papyrus prescribes stalks of Anise thrown on a brazier for the summoning the gods quickly. Extrapolated into modern ritual use, the aerial portions may be added to suffumigants used as 'spirit-food', their chief purpose being to attract and manifest divine presence.

When consuming Anise in a prepared philter, the essential oil should be avoided. Raw Anise seeds may be used to generate tincture, wine, or distillate, and a great variety of commercial anise liqueurs are produced, such a good-quality Pastis. Among the best of these is Xtabentun, produced in Mexico. This intriguing beverage is produced from rum, anise, and honey from the nectar of the psychoactive plant Ololiúqui (*Turbina corymbosa*).

APPLE

Malus spp.

Rosaceæ (Rose Family)

GENUS *Malus*, the True Apples, encompasses about 50 species of deciduous hardwood trees and shrubs growing to 8 meters in height. They bear five-petaled flowers, colored white, pink, or red, giving rise to Autumn pome fruits. Fruits of cultivated Apples (*M. domeſtica*) are esculent, but due to complex genetics, fruits of wild trees vary widely in size, shape and flavor. Kazakhſtan is underſtood to be its genetic cradle, and there today small communities of native, wild Apple foreſt are ſtill found leading a ruſtic exiſtence. The much-beloved cultivated Apple has taken well to the companionship of human ſtewards and served as the genetrix of thousands of delicious varieties.

Apple has some hiſtory of folk medicinal use, possessing properties as an aſtringent, febrifuge, hepatic, digeſtive, diuretic, and oral tonic. For treating fever, a ſtrong decoction brewed from 3 or 4 sliced fruits was drunk. To allay the noisome itch of chilblains, putrefying apples were directly applied as a poultice. The fruits contain a number of important vitamins, chiefly C and several B complexes; as well as minerals, particuarly phosphates, and malic acid.

The portions used in medicine and magic are the wood, bark, flower, fruit, peel, and seeds. As a hardwood, it excels for carving and is also valued for smoking meats. Dried and powdered wood may be smoldered as a pleasing and fragrant incense; the bark, peeled from branches that have firſt been cut from the tree, may also be so used. Apple seeds, if consumed after their husks are broken, can be poisonous. A young child can be harmed by 5-20 seeds; while an adult can swallow scores without ill effect; a cupful of the seeds can induce cyanide poisoning in adults.

> *We read in Pierius, that an Apple was the Hieroglyphicke of Love, and that the Statua of Venus was made with one in her hand.*
>
> SIR THOMAS BROWNE
> *Pseudodoxia Epidemica, 1672*

True to its family among the Rose-clan, its principal occult properties are Love, Attraction, and Allure, a power radiated by its handsome appearance, color, and smell. Additional magical associations are Consecration, Immortality, Fertility, Balance, and Harmony. Voluminous love-charms utilize Apple fruit, and the pulverized seeds may be added to incenses mixed in honor of Venus, Aphrodite, and other divinities of beauty and erotic desire. Branches of Apple, respectfully cut, have traditionally been used to manufacture wands of love. Apple blossom honey, though rare, is one of the fineſt produced, and is especially allied with erotic magic. Some love-philters from ancient Egypt—especially for winning the love of a woman—employ the seeds; one such recipe appears in *The Leyden Papyrus*:

> A potion. You take a little shaving of the head of a man who has died a violent death, together with seven grains of barley that has been buried in the grave of a dead man; you pound them with ten *oipe*, otherwise nine, (of) apple-seeds; you add blood of a worm...of a black dog to them, with a little blood of your second finger (that) of the heart, of your left hand, and with your semen, and you pound them together and put them into a cup of wine and add three *utch* to it of the firſt fruits of the vintage, before you have taſted it and before they have poured out from it; and you pronounce this invocation to it seven times and you make a woman drink it...

The origin of the witch's poisoned apple lies in multiple ſtrands of magical tradition, likely beginning with the fruits charmed with spoken incantations. Incantations spoken over apples to empower them as love-charms are also known in ancient Mediterranean contexts, such as the ancient Greek practice of caſting enchanted apples during weddings and other events, to provoke uncontrollable sexual desire. One ancient spell invoking Aphrodite and chanted three times over apples proclaimed:

> I shall throw apples...and thereby I shall provide this timely love spell for both mortal people and immortal gods. I...threw the apple and I hit (her) with the apple. Setting everything aside, may she fall madly in love with me; whether she takes it in her hand and eats...or holds it in her bosom, may she not ſtop loving me. O goddess born on Cyprus, carry out this perfect charm.

Enchanted Apples are a ſtrong thread in the weaving of European lore. The golden Apples of the Norse goddess Iðunn held the power to invigorate the gods until the coming of Ragnarök. In some ancient Irish legends, a magical branch of Apple would allow a mortal to visit the Otherworld. There was also mention of a magic Apple branch given to Bran from the Tree of Emain "which produced sweet music." The primeval Irish god Gobniu, smith and Lord of Brewing, manufactured a heady sacred ale from the apples of the Otherworld which was drunk to ensure eternal youth.

The Spirit-Retinue of the Apple

Appeal, Blandishment, Health, Stamina, Revelation,
License, Sultriness, Heresy, Encipherment,
Concealed Mystery, Pristine Nakedness,
Forbidden Knowledge, and
Divine Fecundation.

The tree and its fruit are also conveyors of fecundity. In a fertility rite from Turkestan, barren Kyrgyz women roll themselves on the ground beneath a solitary Apple tree in order to conceive. Old agricultural spells for bountiful apple crops involved burying thirteen Apple leaves.

Amid apple-orchards in England, children are still warned of Awd Goggie and Lazy Lawrence, Apple-sprites or *bogies* known to haunt orchards, protecting unripe fruit. In Cornwall and the west of England, a certain number of prized apples are left on the tree at harvest time as a tithe to the fair-folk.

The English custom of wassailing Apple trees was, and still is, practiced to vouchsafe the fertility of the coming crop, and to chase spirits from the orchard that might otherwise beleaguer or befoul the trees. Also called apple-howling, the ritual of wassailing was practiced in diverse English locales, occurring most richly in Somerset and Devon.

Some Greek legends prescribe a flowered, fruited branch of Apple as a magical talisman to enter the underworld. If an apple tree blossoms out of season, especially in the fall, it portends the imminent death of a loved one.

In the modern ritual magic tradition known as the Sabbatic Craft, the Apple tree is aligned with the western quarter of the circle, the setting sun, and the angelic intelligence of Azael. It represents the fulfilment of incarnation, the summation of life's work, and the powers of the harvest, as well as heralding the coming gateway of death and going-forth of the spirit.

CORRESPONDENCES
Essence: Enchantment.
Powers: Allure, Love, Fertility, Glamour, Illumination.
Elements: Earth, Water, Air, Fire, Æther.
Planet: Venus.
Deific Forms: Aphrodite, Eris, Venus, Iðunn, Samael.
Magical Event: Gnosis.
Body Part: Eye.
Therapeutic: Homeorhesis.
Affliction: Bewitchment.
Poison: Prussic Acid.
Number: 5.
Eponymous Compounds: Malic Acid—$C_4H_6O_5$
Image: a golden fountain in the shape of a goddess, situated amidst the lush verdure of a garden, with an empty cup resting before it.

Of the Enchanted Apple

No other plant symbol is as closely associated with bewitchment in the imagination as the poisoned apple, popularized by the Brothers Grimm in such tales as Sleeping Beauty, and esoterically resonant with the Apple of Discord thrown by the goddess Eris, and the Edenic concept of 'forbidden fruit'. Indeed, name of the fallen angel Samael (סַמָּאֵל), identified with the Serpent of Eve's temptation, in some interpretations is translated 'Venom of God'. The metaphor endures in the concept of spiritual duplicity, epitomized in concealed poison, and that outward beauty which conceals an inner rottenness.

From Arabian ethnobotanical tradition comes a powerful epithet for Mandrake, *Tuphac el Shaitan*, or the Devil's Apple, a plant with undisputed narcotic properties, some effects of which resemble the Apple of Sleeping Beauty. Similar names for Mandrake emerge from the Arabic naming tradition, such as *Tuffah el Majanin* (Madmen's Apples). In Hebrew, the same plant also bears the name 'Love Apple', in reference to its use as a fertility charm, aphrodisiac, and arouser of ardour. The comparison of the Apple to a Mandrake, a plant unrelated botanically, is also likely due to its colorful, visually appealing fruits.

The poisoned apple of fable has earlier corollaries in experiments of natural magic. In European ethnomedical traditions, a formula for an actual 'poison apple' is found in the *Magia Naturalis* of Giambattista della Porta (1588). The text furnishes the reader with a recipe for a

'Sleeping Apple', made from Opium, Mandrake, juice of Hemlock and Henbane seeds, bound with musk and shaped into a large ball. This concentrated toxiferous sphere, when brought near to the nose and deeply inhaled by patients, would duly "binde them with a deep sleep."

A second enchanted Apple tradition, permeating many of the European grimoire texts, is the inscription of apples with magical seals or words of power, to effect practical magic. The 17th century cunning man's book *The Grimoire of Arthur Gauntlett* contains a wealth of such inscribed apple spells, such as the following, which was in currency a century or more earlier:

> *Write on an apple Raguell, Lucifer, Sathanus, and say, I conjure thee apple by these three names written on thee, that whosoever shall eat thee, may burn in my love.*

The tradition is likely far older, as it is found in the tenth-century Byzantine grimoire *Geoponika*. Here is given a charm for preventing wine from souring. In accordance with this formula, the Biblical maxim "Taste and see that the Lord is good" is inscribed on an apple and then floated in the vintage.

In early twentieth century England, the folklorist Moses Gaster collected several surviving love charms, of which the following required an apple:

Write in an apple these three names

Aatnell: Loliell: Clotiell:

And after say I Conjure thee apple by
these three names that what woman so
ever eats of thee shee may soe Remaine in
my Love that she take no rest
✠
Donec voluntatem mea afervile.

The practice of inscribing written spells and magical characters on the faces of Apples was not limited to love spells. A 1601 report from Cambridgeshire accusing a man of sorcery mentions charms wherein the man cut Apples in half, inscribed their faces with odd sigils, and fed them to hogs to prevent them from contracting rabies.

The Welsh fairy-doctors, whose traditional cures were both incanted to the saints and compounded in mortar and pestle, steward a unique tradition of magical healing. The *Physicians of Myddfai*, a manual of curative magic and receipts set down in the 18th century—but by tradition said to date from the 1200s—includes inscriptions of Apples and nails with healing charms:

> *For all sorts of ague, write in three apples on three separate days.*
>
> *In the first apple O Nagla Pater*
> *In the second apple O Nagla Filius*
> *In the Third Apple O Nagla Spiritus Sanctus.*
>
> *And on the third day he will recover.*

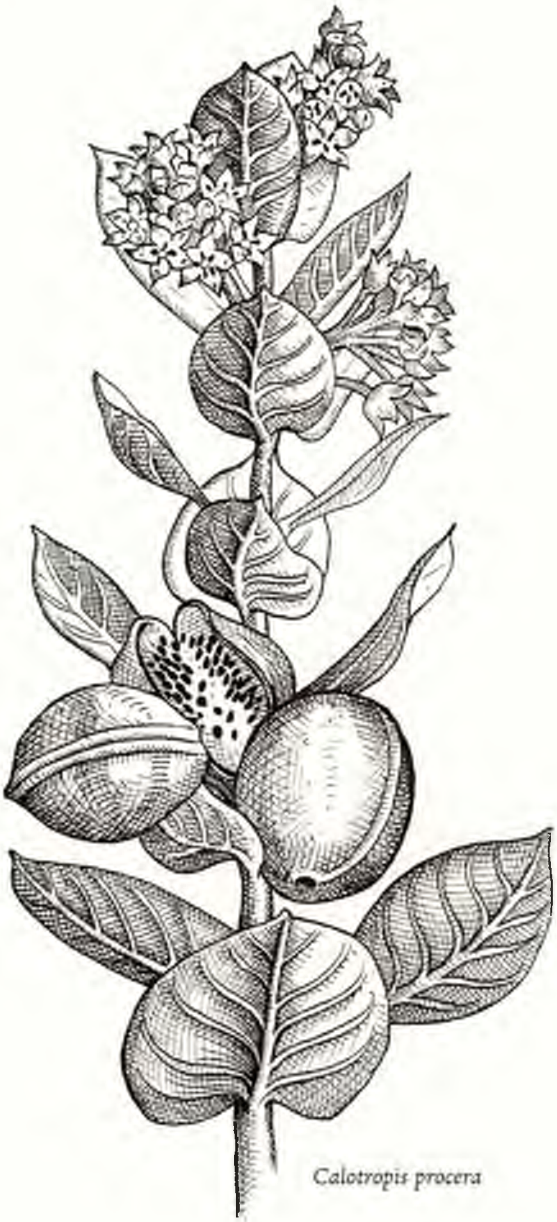
The power of the enchanted Apple is also referenced in the *Pomander* or 'smelling apple' of the Middle Ages, carried to prevent plague, witchcraft, and exposure to various infectious miasmas. This aromatized orb occupied a peculiar niche in occult traditions, for at once it was used as a medicinal, a magical talisman, a fragrance, and, arguably, a fashion accessory. They were compounded from resins, musk, wax, floral waters, and spices, and constituted a fascinating stratum of magical medicine, various forms of which endured in Europe for centuries.

APPLE OF SODOM

Calotropis procera

Apocyanaeæ (Dogbane Family)

THE mythical Apple of Sodom dwells in the Jordan Valley, North Africa, and South Africa; it is now naturalized as an invasive species in a number of places including Hawai'i and Australia. The genus *Calotropis* has two known species, the other being C. *gigantea*, which shares many of the magical and ethnomedical properties of C. *procera*. The herb's first appearance to the desert wanderer, it is said, was always attended with a bitter northeast wind. Magically, it is emblematic of deception, particularly of relating to beauty and appearance, and of the concealed powers which thrive amid ruins and devastation. The fruit is a eucharistic symbol, an atavistic memory of the old Edenic compact between Woman and Serpent. Awakened through ritual, it signifies transmission of power from spirit to human.



Calotropis procera

As a member of the botanical family Apocyanaceae, it possesses many of its characteristic features, such as distinctive, alluring flowers and a poisonous sap. Its fruits are conspicuous, being swollen and globose, suggesting of sweet delight. However, as ancient writers remarked, the fruits deceived, and were far from palatable:

> *The country of Sodom...was of old a most happy land, both for the fruits it bore and the riches of its cities, although it be now all burnt up. It is related how, for the impiety of its inhabitants, it was burnt by lightning; in consequence of which there are still the remainders of that divine fire, and the traces [or shadows] of the five cities are still to be seen, as well as the ashes growing in their fruits; which fruits have a color as if they were fit to be eaten, but if you pluck them with your hands, they dissolve into smoke and ashes.*
>
> FLAVIUS JOSEPHUS
> *The Jewish War*, 75 CE

The fibrous seeds, ejected when the ripe pods explode, resemble cotton or ashes. Known as Ushar in Arabia, it was called by the Hebrews *Tapuach Sdom* and bears similar names in other tongues: Devil's Apple, Pomo di Sodoma, and Mad Apple. It has long been valued for magic, medicine, and fiber; in Arabian traditional pharmacy medicine it is a known poison, and the observed effects include abdominal inflammation after oral ingestion of the plant. The latex or sap contains calotropin, colotoxin, calactin, uscharidin, and vourscharin, all of which are novel cardiac aglycones allied to the heart-regulating spectrum of principles found in *Digitalis*. The juice, which is a gastric irritant, can cause slowing of the heartbeat, and in excess dosages, hypertension, convulsions and death. In Rajasthan, the flowers serve to preserve the flesh after snakebite; the blossoms are also valued in India as an aphrodisiac. Ash derived from the leaf treats colds and respiratory complaints.

The Bedouin used charcoal from the wood in the hand-formulation of *bārūd*, or black gunpowder. Sometimes the toxic latex was squeezed from the fruit and compounded with the powder, as a charm to make bullets shoot straighter.

The Apple of Sodom was a source of great power in connection with rites of Sun worship in both Arabia and India. During drought or famine, an Arabian charm utilized the dried plant, set aflame and tied to the tail of a wild bull. The animal was turned loose with this smoldering talisman, which summoned rain. The plant is considered sacred both to Ganesh and to Shiva. The older designation of Apple of Sodom was, unsurprisingly, a nightshade: *Solanum sodomaeum*, a thorny native to South Africa but now an established exotic in many locales throughout the world. Like *Calotropis*, the nightshade Sodom-apple puts forth alluring flowers and an attractive golden fruit; it too contains a considerably toxic poison complex. The plant's venom notwithstanding, the glycoalkaloids have been extracted for topical creams in the treatment of skin cancers. A more recent taxonomical assignment has dropped sodomaeum and the plant is presently classified as *Solanum linnaeaum*, after the great botanist Carl von Linne.

In the Sudan, where it is known as *ushar*, it is used as an abortifacient and a poison of infanticide. Necklaces made from the stems are worn by children to protect them from disease, and the strange fruit of the plant serves as a fertility talisman.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Deception, Spirit-Summoning, Warfare.
Planets: Mars, Saturn.
Element: Fire.
Patron Spirits: Jinn, *genius loci*.
Deific Forms: Shiva, Ganesha, Hanuman.
Alchemical Concept: Empyreuma.
Divine Appellation: Tapuach Sdom.
Virtue: Duplicity.
Body Part: Skin, Heart.
Therapeutic: Humiliation.
Affliction: Hubris.
Poison: Cardiotoxic.
Eponymous Compounds: Calotropin—$C_{29}H_{40}O_9$.
Emblem: A woman in a green robe and horned mask, standing amongst ruins. With her right hand she beckons, and from her left billows a cloud of acrid smoke.

ARBORVITÆ

Thuja spp.
Cupressaceæ (Cypress Family)

MEANING *Tree of Life*, Arborvitae is also known by the names Hackmatack, Lebensbaum, White Cedar, Swamp Cedar, and Yellow Cedar. It is a fragrant evergreen tree reaching 30 meters in height, native to North America, with small, scale-like leaves and shaggy, ruddy bark. Its cones are elliptical, and it populates swamps and mountain slopes. Arborvitae is not the Cedar of ancient European magical use, though some redactors of plant lore have perpetuated this error. *Thuja occidentalis* is a New World tree, and, while there are indeed *Thuja* species growing in East Asia, it is more likely that the 'Cedar' mentioned in old European magical texts (sometimes associated with Arborvitae) refers instead to species of *Cedrus*, or True Cedar. The fragrant leaves, wood, and resin of the tree are all valuable in medicine and ceremony.

Its power lies in the virtues of purification and chasing infectious spirits, with added specialization for funerary rites. Smoke from the burning leaves was esteemed as a ceremonial fumigant by some Native American tribes; the Hurons ascribed great benefit to its power of frightening snakes by way of its odor; branches of it were carried on journeys and kept in their beds. The Ojibwa smoldered it on coals as a powerful incense in their purification rites, and acclaimed its virtues in the sweat lodge as well. Smoke from the smoldered fronds purified the longhouses, and its bark was smoked ceremonially. The Forest Potawatomis smudged the leaves on hot coals, with other admixtures, in compound fumigants for purification and exorcism. Smoldered leaves of both *T. orientalis* and *T. occidentalis* possess long traditions of use as an incense for exorcising evil spirits. The magnificent *Thuja plicata* (Pacific Red Cedar) was often the choice tree for the totem pole, chosen after ceremonial harvesting.

The Spirit-Retinue of Arborvitae

Invigoration, Continuity, Wholesomeness, Resolution, Enspherement, Depuration, Cohesion, Dominion, Enclosure, Stalwart Vigilance, Atavistic Concentration, Sanctified Memory, and Ancestral Blessing.

Arborvitae is an historical abortifacient, though at times an effective dose was sufficient to rid a woman not only of the fetus, but of her own life. The twigs were also used to treat uterine and prostate problems. Essential oil of Thuja, taken internally, is a powerful and dangerous convulsant. Leaf and bark tea were at one time used by sailors against the scurvy.

The Doctrine of Signatures is borne out by this tree, whose leaves bear tiny wartlike protuberances: Oil of Thuja is a supreme topical antifungal, and general destroyer of warts and other abominations of the skin. Some Native American peoples employed the leaves, boiled in bear grease, as a salve in this regard.

Essential oil of Arborvitae is used in some insect repellants and perfumes. In at least one documented case, this oil has been shown to induce convulsions and unconsciousness. In addition to essential oil and resin, Arborvitae contains the aromatic compounds thujone, thujine, thujugine, pinene, sabinene, camphor, and fenchone. The branches may be gathered during any season, and thereupon dried in a warm place, provided it there is substantial movement of air.

Eau d'Arborvitae.

❡ A fragrant tincture for topical use may readily be made from the leaves and twigs. Take such material as you have freshly gathered, crush coarsely in a mortar, and inter in a clean, sealed vessel. This is then covered with rectified spirit of at minimum 60% ABV. Steep for 3–4 weeks, then strain and reserve liquid.

ARNICA

Arnica montana

Asteraceæ (Sunflower Family)

A PERENNIAL European herb with large yellow flower heads, growing to 75 cm in height and populating alpine meadows. It is mostly known from herbal medicine in which it is valued for treating injuries; tincture is made from dried flowers and used topically for bruises, sprains, and swelling. Contact dermatitits may occur when handling the plant, and consumption of whole material can be fatal. Part of the plant's toxicity is due to the presence of the sesquiterpene lactone helenalin ($C_{15}H_{18}O_4$), which has also been shown in some studies to reduce inflammation.

In planetary correspondence, Arnica is aligned with the Sun and Saturn; its powers in magical operations are Exorcism, Protection, and Healing. In southeastern Germany, Arnica was collected on St. John's Eve (June 23) and stored as protection against lightning strikes on the roof or window of the house. On German farms, the herb was placed in the corners of the planted field, so that the *Bilmesschnitter*, a grain demon, could not cause any harm to the seed.

> *If a person's skin has been touched with fresh Arnica, he or she will burn lustily with love for the person who is afterward touched by the same herb. He or she will be so incensed with love, almost infatuated, and will become a fool.*
>
> HILDEGARD OF BINGEN
> *Physica*, 1158

Tincture of *Arnica montana* is also used as a demonifuge in the folk magic of northern Peru; the extract is used to splash the corners and center of the house, as well as for making the sign of the cross on the front door.

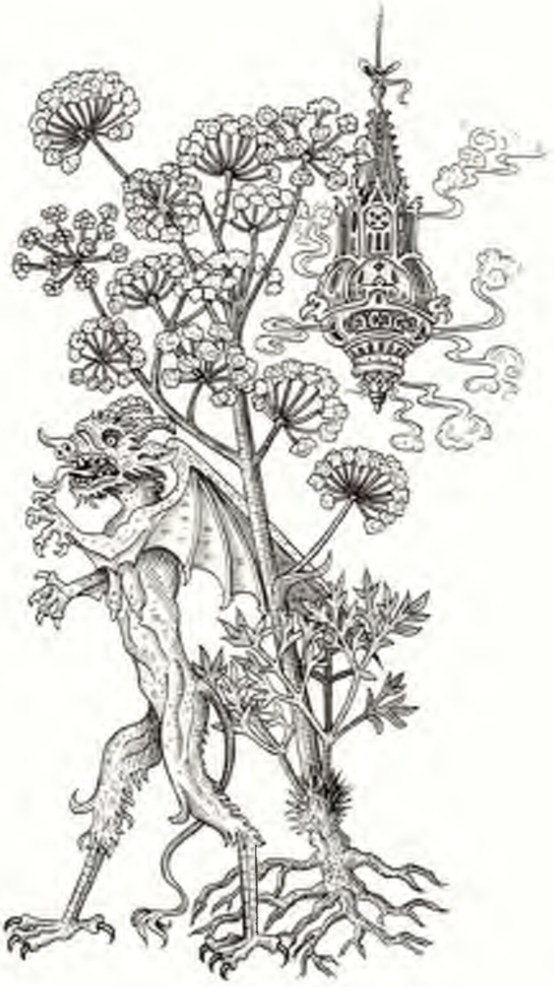
ARTEMISIA

THE name of a large genus of plants in the Asteraceæ or Sunflower family, notable species include Wormwood, Mugwort, Sagebrush, Tarragon, and Southernwood. As medicinals, they are important bitter herbs, but the bitterness is also prized for culinary use, as in absinthe and aromatic bitters. As an example of the magnificent diversity and cosmopolitan nature of the genus, Sagebrush (*A. tridentata*) inhabits deserts, while *A. tilesii* grows in the northern tundra. Some, such as *A. ludoviciana*, are hardy enough to withstand planting as a lawn, and thrive with repeated mowing.

Characteristically aromatic, the smoke from the burning leaves and stems of Artemisia species is historically prized for ritual purifications, both of the physical body and the spaces surrounding it, as well as its power in spirit-offerings and prayers. A large number of Artemisias are held in great esteem by Native Americans; in particular, many are associated with the Sun Dance of the Plains tribes. Various *Artemisias* are used in sweat lodge ceremonies, in particular for healing and purification.

The stimulant use of *A. mexicana* is mentioned in an Aztec herbal manuscript, under the section 'Remedies for Lassitude;' the herb was compounded into an ointment and rubbed on the soles of the feet. One Asian species known as Can Ba (*Artemisia vestita*), also known as Russian Wormwood, is an important incense plant among the Lhoba peoples of Tibet. In Central Asia, Herb Santonia (*Artemisia cina*) was once considered a potent aphrodisiac.

Many Artemisia species contain santonin ($C_{15}H_{18}O_3$), a toxic alkaloid known for its antihelmintic properties. This affirms their use as folk cures for expelling parasitic worms, and names such as Wormwood. Because worms were considered embodiments of Satan and his retinue, it is often the case that Artemisias are accorded power against the Devil and used to expel evil spirits. As well as internal purgation, these same properties of Artemisia may be used externally in the form of fumigants, washes, liniments, and oils.



ASAFŒTIDA

Ferula asafœtida
Apiaceæ (Dill Family)

ASANT, Devil's Dung, Stinking Gum, Hiltit, Ani'Odin, and Waraq Alhitit: these are some of the names by which this odoriferous herb is known, a pungent spice burnt as a fumigation against *jinn*, demons and the Evil Eye. An herbaceous perennial growing to 2 meters, Asafœtida has a thick root and feathery leaves; its varied aromatic expressions—fresh, prepared, and burnt—produce a rasping, sulfurous odor. Originally native to Iran, it spread throughout the Mediterannean in ancient times due to its value as a spice, medicine, and agent of magic.

As a medicine, Devil's Dung is stimulant, carminative, and antispasmodic, administered with advantage in several uterine diseases, as well as flatulent colic, infantile convulsions, and whooping cough. The gum is also anticoagulant and lowers blood pressure. Asafœtida is considered a superior aphrodisiac in Ayurvedic medicine, a use Avicenna affirmed. In Tibetan medicine it is used as an antipsychotic, a remedy agreeing with the plant's reputation as a specific against noxious spirits. As would be expected from a plant with these characteristics, its virtues resonate esoterically with the planetary attributes of both Saturn and Mars.

Oleoresin is gathered by wounding the plant, and essential oil distilled from the resin. A simpler harvesting method prescribes incisions to be made in the root and root-crown, causing the oleoresin to flow outward; when this becomes reddish and hardens, it is scraped off the plant and stored in an airtight vessel. Asafœtida may also be found in the form of tincture. The pulverized resin, known as *hing*, may be procured in Indian groceries and is used as a culinary spice, of which there are many grades of intensity. The resin of a sister species, Galbanum (*Ferula gummosa*), wafts an odor less noisome, and indeed even pleasing; this plant is sometimes the 'Asafœtida' referred to for use in incense in older receipts.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF ASAFŒTIDA

Rectitude, Counterpoison, Excitation, Acridity, Repugnance, Wretchedness, Goading, Indiscriminate Slaughter, Forceful Outgassing, Gastric Tumult, Tumaceous Offense, Bold Action, and Wrathful Effluvium.

The magical use of the herb is largely centered on demon-chasing and coersion, often in the form of incenses—medieval necromantic operations of the European magical traditions employed it in this manner. Over the centuries, the root powder assumed a well-trodden and effective role in black magic incense formulae, particularly for the magical harassment or destruction of an enemy. Characteristically, when smoldered, a sharp stench arises, a frequent attribute of exorcism suffumigations.

American Hoodooists wear the root in a flannel bag as a reliable charm to keep enemies away. From the folk magical traditions of rural Virginia, a spell to prevent bewitchment of a horse used Asafœtida, American Ginseng, Dog-Fennel (*Eupatorium capillifolium*), and a bit of sulfur, tied in a red bag and hung around a horse's neck. In Nova Scotia it is used to grease pigs as a protection against witchcraft and rubbed on doors to keep bar the Devil from entering. In Poland, Asafoetida was planted in gardens to prevent forces of malefic magic from entering the home.

CORRESPONDENCES
Powers: Exorcism.
Planets: Mars, Saturn.
Element: Fire.
Deific Forms: The Devil.
Alchemical Concept: Fumigation.
Virtue: Repulsion.
Body Part: Olfactory bulb, limbic system.
Medicine: Antispasmodic, antipsychotic.
Therapeutic: Abreaction.
Affliction: Possession-Obsession.
Emblem: Amidst a bonfire stands a spear that does not burn. Its length is garlanded with demon masks.

Against the Evil Eye

AN ancient strand of magic, persisting into the present moment, is the *malocchio*, better known as the Evil Eye, a penetrating gaze which contaminated, corrupted, or otherwise conveyed impurity. It emerges from the eye of a magical malefactor, and its effects were debilitating in energy, dulling the wits and fatiguing the body in the manner of a vampirical glutting. The concept is remarkably widespread, with regional variations, but all centering around the poisoned glance. In the British Isles, this assumed the form of being 'overlooked' or the sinister *owl-blast* of witches. In Ireland, one could be 'eye-bitten'; in Spanish-speaking countries, it is *malojo*, and *maldeojo*.

The Evil Eye has particularly diverse traditions in Christianity and Islam. In many currents of this belief, women possessed a far greater power to transfix victims than men, and infants, children, and livestock were thought to be especially vulnerable. Because certain physical illnesses were linked with the Evil Eye, its epistemological basis often straddles the boundaries of medicine and magic. In many streams of folklore, the Evil Eye occurs due to the agency of spirits. In some traditions, the sinister force of the Evil Eye may even emanate from landmarks, such as the tomb of 'Amri in al-Wadi al-Abyadh of the Negev Desert.

It is true that some instances of the Eye arise in the context of witchcraft, or sinistral power intentionally sent to a victim as an act of sorcery. In other cases, the accurst emanation occurs without the person's consent, their gaze being usurped by noxious spirits and serving as a vector for their corrupting power. In some traditions, envy is inextricably linked with the phenomenon.

While there are rich traditions using incantations and amulets to combat the Evil Eye, many plants also serve this function. Some are worn as amulets, others are brewed into liquids and used as a bath or a wash, and some others are tied in branches and hung in the home to fulfil essential functions as house-wards. The Orchid, especially those phallic and testicular varieties assimilated to the mythical herb Satyrion, was in addition to its power as an aphrodisiac, used as an amulet against fascination. This magical formula, so peculiar to the post-modern mind, is a tried and true methodology, for it aligns with the ancient sexual spells of exposing the genitalia to set demons to flight, as concretized in the *fascinum* fetish and the Sheela-Na-Gig. Other peculiar plant-shapes served protective functions as well, such as swollen, bulbous roots; cruciform flowers, or palmate leaves.

To those who seek sanctuary in the rational, the Evil Eye endures as a gross relic of ancient superstition, an alien mindset which supplies the germ of rampant prejudice and persecution. Yet in an age of increasing mass-surveillance and snooping, the empiricist and technophile may do well consider to the permutations of the Evil Eye inherent in the bequests of technology. In this case, at the very least, sacred plants may provide hedging and screening, perhaps all the better if they come equipped with an ancient pedigree for disrupting malicious intent.

Herb-Charms Against the Evil Eye

PLANT	BOTANICAL	ORIGIN	USAGE
Rue	*Ruta graveolens*	Mediterranean, Brazil	sprig-amulet, incense decoction of ærial parts
Mountain Rue	*Ruta montana*	Spain	sprigs hung over doors
Syrian Rue	*Peganum harmala*	Turkey	smoldered seeds and fruiting branches
Garlic	*Allium sativum*	Europe, Near East North Africa	whole bulb: amulet
Olive	*Olea europaea*	Bedouin	leaves burnt as incense
Carnation	*Dianthus* spp.	Mediterranean	incense from flowers
Rosemary	*Salvia rosmarinus*	Mediterranean	sprigs: amulet
Oleander	*Nerium* spp.	North Africa	twigs burnt as incense
Onion	*Allium cepa*	Europe	whole bulb: amulet
Coriander	*Coriandrum sativum*	North Africa	smoke from seeds
Immortelle	*Helichrysum italicum*	Italy	smoke from burning stems and leaves
Indigo	*Indigofera* spp.	Africa	blue dye on skin or magical objects
Chile pepper	*Capsicum* spp.	Mexico, Andes	fruits and seeds incense
Umbrella Thorn	*Acacia tortilis*	East Africa	thorns used to impale effigies to blind those sending the Evil Eye
Senserina de San Juan	*Thymus mastichina*	Spain	suffumigant
Jequirity Bean	*Abrus precatorius*	Caribbean	amuletic bracelet
Winter Savory	*Satureja montana*	Italy	herb hung indoors
White Willow	*Salix alba*	Serbia	herb hung indoors
Lavender	*Lavandula* spp.	Spain, Portugal, Italy	strewn, talisman
Asafœtida	*Ferula asafoetida*	India	used to protect infants
Nickernut	*Guilandina bonduc*	British Isles	seed as amulet
Radish	*Raphanus raphanistrum*	Germany	root worn as talisman

ASARUM

Asarum canadense; A. europaeum, other species.
Aristolochiaceæ (Birthwort Family)

SHADE-DWELLING Asarum is a creeping perennial to 20 cm in height, bearing large, dark green leaves of distinctive heart or kidney shapes. In habit and morphology, it superficially resembles *Hedera,* though its growth pattern is more compact. The fragrant, trifurcated flower is of a strange and curious countenance, usually dark maroon to brown, and rarely seen due to its coloring and situation in deep shade. Asarum thrives in loamy soils and leaf litter; reproduction is via seed and, asexually, through the creeping rhizome. Vegetal propagation of the plant is best achieved from lengths of the rhizome. The common North American name Wild Ginger is derived from its aromatic rhizomes, though this may apply to more than one species of *Asarum.* The European variety (*Asarum europaeum*) is also known as Hazelwort.

The herb's aromatic virtue has long afforded it esteem as a plant of power in medicine and magic. In medieval Arabian formulæ, the plant's presence was conspicuous in antidotes to various poisons. A medicinal wine prepared from the plant, known to the Greeks, was used for tonifying the hepatic system. In North America, the Iroquois used *A. canadense* as a potentiator for all medicines. Decoctions of the rhizome were used externally for protection against evil. The Chippewa used it both as a spice and a perfume.

Asarum caudatum was one of the first plant species I encountered during my ten years spent living in the Santa Cruz Mountains of California. A dweller of the Redwood plant community, one of my plant teachers introduced it to me as *Walking Root.* This referred to the rhizome, a spicy length of which could be chewed raw, providing a meditative source of stimulation which lent itself well to long walks in the forest. Similar effects were achieved with the bruised rhizome, which can be used to rub the soles of the feet or placed in the shoe. By contrast the leaf, which has emetic properties, is scrupulously avoided for chewing.

The stimulating, mildly trance-like effects are likely due to the presence of α-Asarone and β-Asarone, the aromatic fraction also found in *Acorus calamus,* known as well for incepting meditative states. In absinthe recipes using Sweet Flag, I have substituted small amounts of *A. canadense* for its incomparable fragrance. The *Acorus* genus as a whole contains varying concentrations of methyl eugenol, elemicin, and safrole. Several species also contain aristolochic acid, identified as a carcinogen thus internal use of the plant should be tempered with this information in mind.

The Spirit-Retinue of Asarum

Inclination, Configuration, Revival, Quickening, Concentration, Diversion, Motivation, Godspeed, Imperturbation, Dark Solitude, Perfumed Invitation, Lurking Presence, and Secret Wayfaring.

ASH

Fraxinus spp.
Oleaceæ (Olive Family)

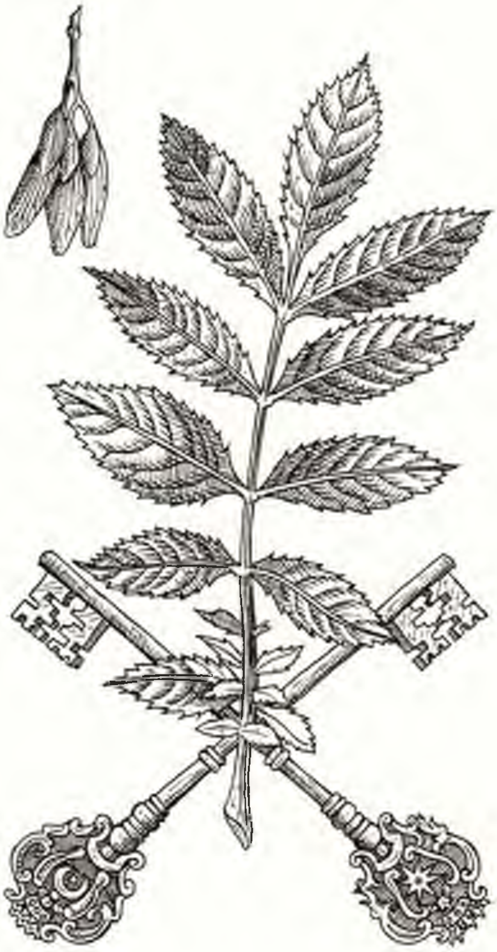
THE genus *Fraxinus* comprises about 65 individual species, most of which are temperate deciduous hardwood trees, reaching heights of 35 meters or higher. Its leaves are odd pinnately compound, with imparipinnate leaflets, and the tree has smooth gray bark, becoming fissured with age. The Ash's distinctive fruits are winged samaras, which are often referred to as 'keys'. The most common Ash species appearing in European magical lore is *F. excelsior,* but the magical characteristics of the tree are found in the entire genus. Ash is known for its aggressive growth habit, its roots strangling other competitors, as well as the ability of mature individuals to assume hermaphroditic sexual embodiments.

According to Hesiod, one of the original human antecessors of humankind was a flesh-eating race of bronze who "sprung from Ash trees...terrible and strong." In the lore of Northern Europe, the Ash tree was the ancient male ancestor of humans, along with the female Elm. In ancient Norse tradition, the great tree Yggdrasil was an Ash.

Several Ash species secrete 'manna', a sugary substance. The ancient Greeks knew the Ash-spirits as *Meliai,* nymphs associated with the tree and especially the honey-sweetness of its manna.

Nemesis, Greek goddess of justice, carried a staff of Ash as a totem of her rigid will.

Among the planets, the Ash resonates most strongly with the Sun and Jupiter. Its powers in magical operations are diverse and include Protection, Divination, Conduction, Fertility, Love, Cursing, Wealth, Protection for Children, Protection from Maleficia, Protection from Poison, and a strong function as House Ward. Powerful in both love and and war, we are reminded that it was from the wood of Ash that Cupid crafted his arrows. In North America, Seeds of White Ash (*F. americana*) were used as an aphrodisiac by the Ojibwe.



The Spirit-Retinue of Ash

Splendor, Pervasiveness, Prowess, Probity, Swiftness, Transmission, Penetration, Columnar Strength, Virile Upwelling, Carnal Radiance, Creative Impulse, Celestial Ascent, and Angelic Intercession.

Its wood is light and hard, and has been used for carving diverse magical fetishes, its straight grain varying from medium to smooth. The homuncular European witchcraft-festish known as the *Alraun*, while often made from Bryony or Mandrake, was also sometimes carved from the roots of Ash. Anti-bewitching spells from North Carolina employed crosses of Ash nailed above the door of the house.

The tree has an ancient reputation for keeping snakes away. According to Pliny the Elder, the leaves of the Ash yield an extract which is a specific for the bites of serpents, and that no serpent will dwell in the tree's shadow. Leaves and twigs were scattered outside the home for this purpose among some indigenous peoples of North America.

As a wand or staff, it is acknowledged to possess the power of undoing setting states of spiritual malignity. In Russian magic, Ash rods were used to strike *were*-animals to compel them to revert to their true forms and renounce witchcraft; stakes of Ash-wood were also planted at crossroads as guardians against the plague.

Ash is the preferred wood for the handle of the ceremonial besom, or Witch's Broom, with Birch-twigs for the brush, bound up tight with Osiers Willow. Rods of Ash were used for magically scourging cattle and other livestock; the act protected them from disease, from meddling spirits, and ensured fertility of the flock. Possessing the favor of Thor, the branches of Ash are said to repel lightning.

Despite the fact that many charms, fetishes and rituals used Ash wood, it was in some areas—as with Elder and Hawthorn—considered unlucky to fell the tree, the act unleashing misery and misfortune upon the woodcutter.

An old cure for hernias, as well as children with congenital ailments, involved passing the patient through a split Ash sapling. The young tree was then bound up tightly. As the Tree healed, so would the patient. Similarly, an old Welsh fertility charm to address the problem of impotence split a young sapling, then bent it round to the shape of a vulva. The afflicted man then passed his member through the orifice thus created; in time, as the tree healed, so did the man.

Like the Elder, some traditions consider Ashes to harbor the spirit of an old woman, beneficent by some accounts, bewitching by others. Some believe that Ashentrees are gathering places for those who practice black arts, or for their familiars.

Some parts of the tree have been consumed for their magical properties. Native Americans smoked the twig tips of F. *americana* as a tobacco substitute. In other traditions, infusions made from the twigs and leaves aid in dream-divination. Some consider the seeds to be aphrodisiac. In southern Italy, a traditional dark green dye is obtained by boiling leaves of F. *excelsior* with Walnut husks, and leaves and berries of *Hedera helix*. Stem bark of F. *ornus* yields a yellow-green dye.

Druidical Fires, used by the ancient Celtic Druids for divination, were sometimes made from heaps of Ash faggots. When the flames rose, the direction of the smoke was studied to extract omens of good or ill.

If an Ash tree does not bear seed in season, it foretells impending public calamity.

CORRESPONDENCES
Essence: Indomitability
Powers: Increase, Conduction, Restoration, Protection
Element: Fire
Planet: Sun
Deific Forms: Odin, Thor, Phoebus, Nemesis, Furies
Spirit-Retinue: the nymphs *Meliai*
Virtue: Fortitude
Body Part: Spinal Column
Corporeal Action: Motivation, Arousal
Emblem: A flaming branch, passed from an angel aloft to a woman, earthbound.

ASIAN GINSENG

Panax ginseng

Araliaceæ (Ginseng Family)

ASIAN Ginseng root is accorded great virtue of corporeal strength, sustenance, and virility. The plant was considered to be the essence of the Earth in a crystallized form; the name of origination *jen shen* reflecting the concept of *Earth embodied as Human*. The plant is an alpine perennial endemic to East Asia, conspicuous by its 5-lobed, palmate leaves and a thick tap root. The infloresence is an umbel of pale white or green flowers, and the fruits are red berries. The plant is slow growing, and overharvesting for human medicinal use has reduced and endangered many wild populations. Cultivation is difficult, the seed requiring 22 months to germinate and the root 6 years to mature.

The root is the portion most frequently employed in magic and medicine; virtue is also attributed to the fruitswhich are used in in Qi-tonifying preparations. As acting upon the body, the properties attributed to the plant are adaptogen, antidepressant, antidiabetic, antihypertensive, antiulceritic, and tonic.

There is considerable variation in the quality of Ginseng patent medicines and dried roots available in commerce; if the potency of the herb source is unknown, use of standardized extracts is encouraged. The plant contains triterpenoid saponins, oleanic acid, ginsenosides, polysaccharides, as well as fifteen amino acids. In ancient Chinese pharmacology, a preparation known as Spring Wine was used as an aphrodisiac philtre, containing, among other specifics, deerhorn shavings and antler resin, Ginseng, powdered ass and human remains, the whole infused in wine for a year.

It is attributed to Jupiter and Mercury in equal proportion, and its occult properties are Fortification, Allure, Immortality, Wealth, Fertility, Divination, Clarivoyance, Illumination, Origination, and Summoning of Earth Spirits.

Ginseng harvesting folklore resembles some tales of the European Mandrake, another plant whose root was considered a 'vegetal human.' Gatherers of the Ginseng feared a tiny, red-eyed demon said to guard the plant. This unseemly creature possessed the power to destroy the eyesight of the gatherer or drink his blood. Root harvesters underwent elaborate preparations and ritual purifications, including abstinence from meat, alcohol, and sexual activity, as well as ritual baths and oblations to deities. There was also the persistent fear that roots would vanish once found.

ASHWAGANDA

Withania somnifera

Solanaceæ (Nightshade Family)

ALSO known as Horseroot or Winter Cherry, Ashwaganda is perennial shrub to 1.5 meters tall with green, funnel-shaped flowers and red berry-like fruits, thriving on waste ground in tropical and North Africa, and throughout Asia. Several subspecies or cultivars are known in India, and it is a potent and attractive addition to the medicine garden. Some varieties produce fleshy, tuberous roots of rude, humanoid shape. Its name denotes 'horse odor', owing to its characteristic smell of equine urine. In some regions of India where the plant is valued as an anti-witchcraft amulet, it bears the name *Evil-killer*.

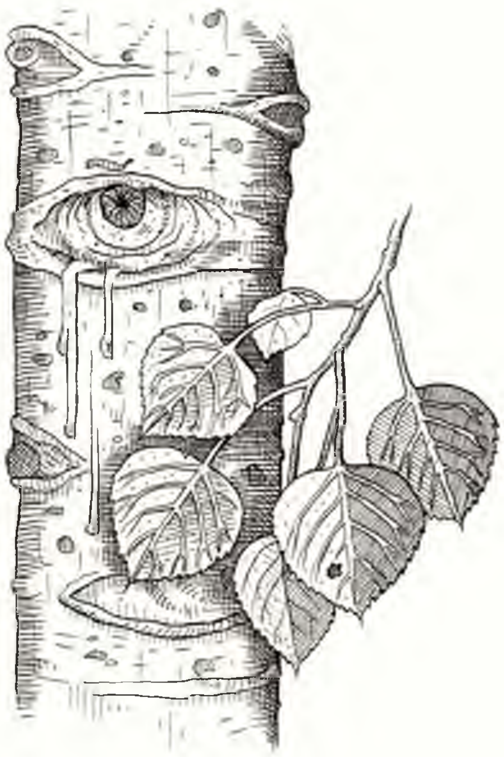
Its pharmacological action upon the body is antibacterial, antifungal, aphrodisiac, diuretic, emmenagogue, sedative, adaptogenic, hypotensive, anti-tumor, nervine, tonic, and stimulant. The plant contains steroidal substances collectively termed withanolides, though it shares important tropane alkaloids with Mandrake, such as cuscohygrine. The active principles are concentrated mostly in the root, though the fruits and leaves are also valued. Sudanese folk medicine has used it as an aphrodisiac, though in Morocco the plant was burned to induce abortions; this attests to the dual nature of its steroidal components.

Traditional medicine reckons it as a sedative for infants and to tonify the uterus after miscarriage. The virtues of the root, through pulverization, can be infused into vegetable oils and the resulting medicament applied externally to boils. The leaves are traditionally used for the destruction of lice, and a soap is made from the berries.

Its magical powers encompass banishing, exorcism, protection from spirits, healing, and use as a love charm. Though often fibrous, its roots can, like many of the Nightshades, exhibit perversions of morphology, assuming grotesque, convoluted forms resembling the human body. Such roots are prized for talismanic use. In some Ethopian herbal traditions, *Withania* roots are burned as an incense to overcome evil spirits.

Owing to its panoply of magical and medicinal powers, as well as the anthropomorphic shape of its root, some have identified Ashwaganda with the ancient Vedic *Jangida*, a plant possessing strong amuletic powers, protection from witchcraft and anti-inflammatory properites. Like *Soma*, the plant's identity is uncertain and much debated.

* * *



ASPEN

Populus tremuloides

Salicaceæ (Willow Family)

QUIVERS, as Aspen is also known, is a handsome deciduous tree to 20 meters, growing at altitudes of up to 3,000 meters and favoring habitats below Spruce forest. The bark is initially white, turning silver-gray with age, and its golden leaves brighten mountainsides at the onset of autumn. In botanical medicine it is analgesic, diuretic, and depurative.

Because of the hard virtues of its wood, Aspen was once called 'the shield-maker's tree.' Its historical magical uses have included protection from—and infliction of—disease, and triumph in war. The valued parts are the twigs and leaves. In Russia, the ashes of Aspen logs burnt on Holy Thursday were a substance especially valued by local wizards. Among celestial intelligences, it gains the planetary favor of Venus, especially in her lovemaking, bond-fastening, and manipulative aspects.

The medieval Doctrine of Signatures, noting the trembling of the leaves of Aspen, prescribed it as an anti-convulsant for nervous conditions such as ague. An old healing spell required victims of palsy to pin a lock of their hair to an Aspen tree while repeating the chant:

Aspen Tree, Aspen Tree
I prithee shiver and shake
Instead of me.

An old Norwegian spell invokes the Aspen's shuddering powers in order to bewitch the occupants of a house into dancing. A leaf is inscribed with the words ELO ELLEAM FAGIAM GRANTEM and placed under the doorstep, & shortly thereafter the festivities begin.

The Book of Angels, Rings, Characters and Images of the Planets, a medieval European manuscript attributed to the friar Osburn Bokenham, presents a curious curse for causing disease. Four iron nails are struck with a hammer into an Aspen tree, proclaiming these words, along with the name of the one whom the spirits of disease are to strike:

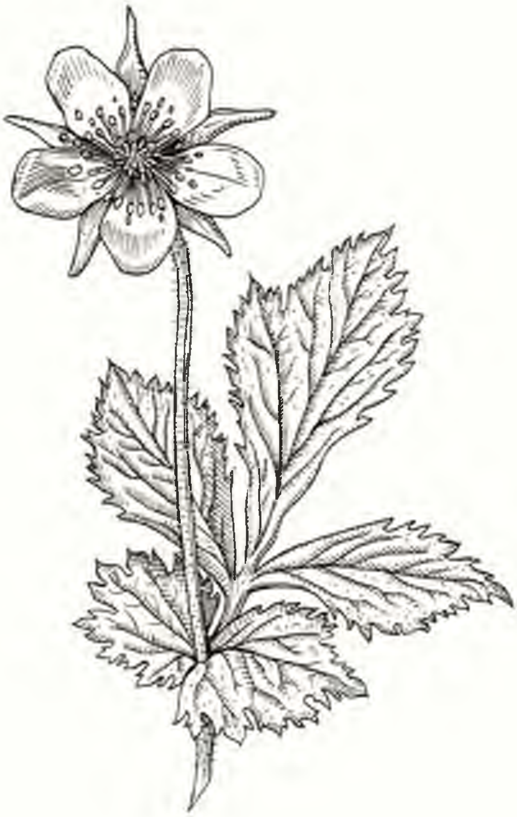
> Gartiraf, Vetearcon, Yron, Artenegelun, Nymgarraman, Laftalium, Oragin, Oclachanos—I bid you that N. may be sickened! And in the name of Bilet, the name of the king, that N. be diseased and tremble hard from an intractable fever.

The spell invokes by sympathetic magic the convulsive qualities of the Aspen leaves, which have given rise to the name Quaking Aspen in some parts. To reverse the spell, the sorcerer extracts one nail from the tree on a Monday.

As noted by researcher Michael Ostling, Polish witchcraft traditions contained a spell to attract a man employing a branch of Aspen: the bough was suspended in the fireplace, hung by a thread taken from the witch's undergarments. This would incite yearning in the heart of her beloved. Malefic spells to attack a victim, also of Polish origin, used Aspen wood, together with soil taken from the footprint of the intended victim.

The Spirit-Retinue of Aspen

Liveliness, Dynamism, Trembling, Undulation, Swaying, Dyskinesia, Dizziness, Commotion, Whispering, Sussurus, Insinuation, Persuasion, Frightened Retreat, Entranced Foresight, and Terpsichorean Ecstasy.



AVENS

Geum urbanum

Rosaceæ (Rose Family)

KNOWN to plant lore as as St. Benedict's Herb, Avens is a shade-dwelling perennial reaching 50 cm in height, with small, scented pale yellow flowers suggesting the pentalphic mystery of the Rose and its kin. Sprawling in the woodland understory, yet refined in form, its appearance evokes both civilized gardens and wild, lonely places. In the garden, it prefers partial shade, with moist, yet well-drained soil. Native to Europe and the Near East, it is known for its aromatic root, as well as its appointment in old remedies as a gastric and epigastric restorative. In the manufacture of ales, brewers added Avens as an antibacterial to prevent spoilage and the proliferation of unseemly flavors, and to bestow a clove-like, balsamic essence of its own. In planetary correspondence, where its alignments and energetics are particularly applicable to medicine, it is aligned with Jupiter.

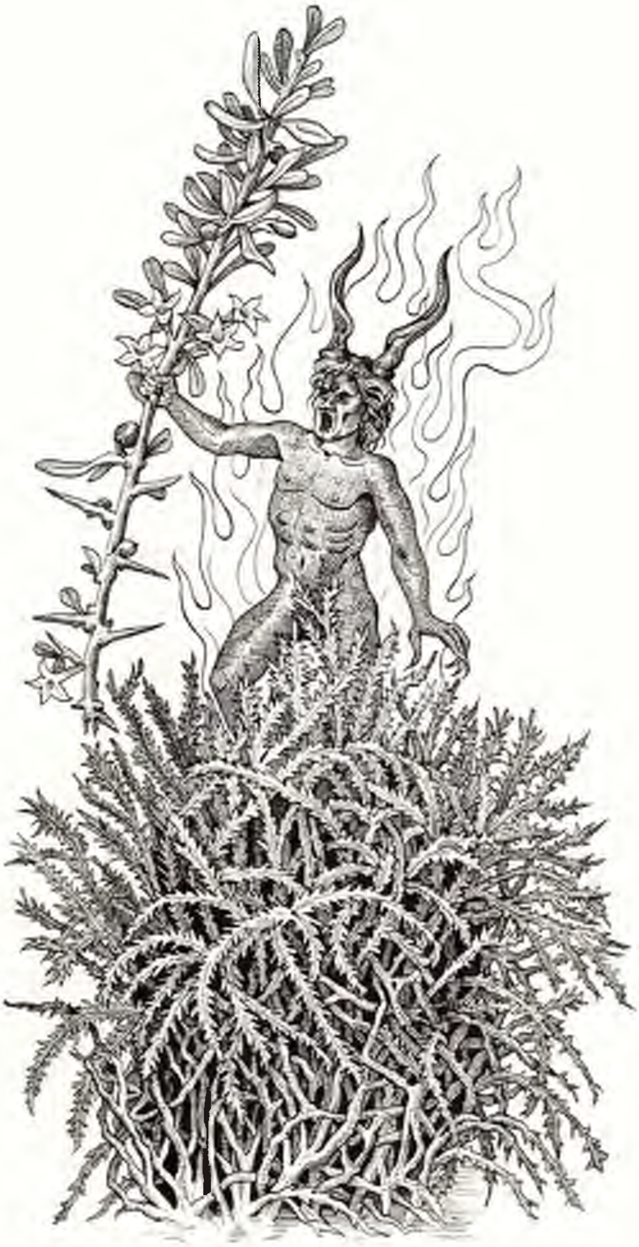
The genus *Geum*, comprising the True Avens, encompasses about 50 species of nearly cosmopolitan distribution. Most species of *Geum* have aromatic roots, and an allied human tradition of medicine or magic. Its medicinal virtues pass freely into tincture, as well as infusion or decoction. The tannin content of the root, ideally gatghered in spring, aids in the herb's efficacy as an astringent and anti-inflammatory.

> *Some use in the Spring time to put the root to steep for a time in wine, which giveth unto it a delicate savour and taste, which they drinke fasting every morning, to comfort the heart and preserve it from noysome and infectious vapors of the plague...*
>
> JOHN PARKINSON
> *Theatrum Botannicum*, 1640

In European magic, Avens was accorded the powers of protection, exorcism, and was also valued as a savior from venomous beasts. The root was employed as a potent protector of hearth and home; it was valued in folk sorcery as a demonifuge. Its root, carried as a talisman, was a powerful charm against all demonic forces, including Satan himself.

Several noteworthy Avens species evolved in North America, where they have long been recognized for their power. The Blackfoot crushed the ripe seeds of Prairie Smoke (*Geum triflorum*), for use in perfumes. Root-shavings of the same plant were compounded with Tobacco for a mentally invigorating smoking mixture. The Nlaka'pamux peoples of British Columbia brewed the same species into a stimulating body-wash for use in sweat lodges. As a love-potion, Okanagan women drank a root infusion to regain lost love.

CORRESPONDENCES
Powers: Protection, Exorcism, Allure.
Element: Fire.
Planet: Jupiter, Venus.
Virtue: Renewal.
Corporeal Loci: Skin, stomach, oral mucosa.
Chemical Virtues: Eugenol.
Medicine: Stomachic, antiseptic, aromatic.
Image: A green war-shield, emblazoned with a pentagrammic star, the whole emanting a yellow flame.



AWSAJ

Lycium shawii
Solanaceæ (Nightshade Family)

A MEMBER of the potent and baneful Solanaceæ, Awsaj is a hardy shrub 1–3 meters in height, bearing thorns and pink or purple flowers. It ranges from the Eastern Mediterranean through Eastern Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, to Iran and India, proliferating in deserts washes and wadis, and is also known to haunt the ruins of ancient necropoli. It is also known by the name of Arabian Boxthorn.

This rugged shrub is strongly associated with the jinn, the semi-corporeal beings of smokeless fire that, according to Islamic lore, traffic in human affairs, bringing sinister influence, power, chaos, or sometimes luck. Thickets of the shrub are regarded as being haunted with jinn and certain taboos are observed in relation to it, such as the Bedouin prohibition against cutting its firewood. Despite the pall under which the plant falls, its fruits are edible, and like its relative Goji (*Lycium barbarum*), and are used for food and medicine in some forms of native Arabian traditional medicine.

Of Balms and Balsams

THE words *balm* and *balsam* are undeniably confounding terms in texts of magic and botany, and a great many such references predate modern botanical nomenclature. The word balm or *bawn* is an abbreviation of balsam: it may be derived from the Hebrew *bot smin*, 'chief of oils,' or *besem*, 'a sweet smell.' In general, ancient sorcerous and medical terminology frequently referred to *balsam* as a general name for healing tree resins, either raw or infused in oil. Often, however, the word was used to indicate a specific plant.

Some contemporary writers on natural magic have identified ancient magical references (primarily European, Mediterranean, and Arabian) to balm or balsam as genus *Balsamodendron;* which included Myrrh and Balm of Gilead; this botanical taxon is no longer recognized by science. Most of the plants in the aforementioned genus are now collectively part of the genus *Commiphora*, a great confederation of fragrant trees including Myrrh. The ancient *balsam* may refer to the resins of these plants or the resins of various species of Balsam Fir (*Abies* spp.).

To complicate the matter, Balm of Gilead (*Commiphora opobalsamum*) is often meant when balsam is indicated; but in modern magical texts, a number of plants from varying genera are given this name, such as the unopened buds of Balsam Poplar (*Populus balsamifera*): this is the Balm of Gilead so often purveyed by North American occult vendors, even though this tree's native range is far from the Levant, where true Balm of Gilead is endemic. Also called Balm of Gilead is the perennial herb Canary Balm, (*Cedronella canariensis*), a plant of the Mint Family whose scent, though odorous, bears no resemblance to true Balm of Gilead; yet it is a worthy ally in perfumes and sachets. Finally, Lemon Balm (*Melissa officinalis*) is also sometimes referred to in folklore and magic by the word balm, especially in alchemy. In general, the words *balm* and *balsam* were a mark of plant character to the ancients, implying they contained fragrant, healing oils, often soothing when topically applied to the skin. The modern, scientific definition of balsam relies more on chemical constituents; to be considered a balsam, a resin must contain benzoic or cinnamic acid as a component of its esters. In alchemy, Paracelsus used 'balsam' in a transcendental sense, indicating a substance with permeating and elevating healing qualities:

> *There is, indeed, diffused through all things a Balsam created by God, without which putrefaction would immediately supervene. Thus in corpses which are anointed with Balsam we see that corruption is arrested and thus in the physical body we infer that there is a certain natural and congenital Balsam, in the absence of which the living and complete man would not be safe from putrefaction. Nothing removes the Balsam but death. But this kind differs from what is more commonly called Balsam, in that the one is conservative of the living, and the other of the dead.*
>
> PARACELSUS
> *The Treasure of Treasures for Alchemists*

BALSAM OF PERU

Myroxylon balsamum var. *pereirae*

Fabaceæ (Pea Family)

Myroxylon is a tall, straight-trunked tropical tree growing to 35 meters in height. It has odd pinnate leaves, fragrant white flowers, and winged seed pods to 13 cm in length. Cultivated principally for its balsam in Central America, where it is endemic, it has become an invasive species outside its native range.

A fragrant, reddish-brown balsam is obtained from wounding of the trunk, or the product of its further distillation into essential oil; this is known as Black Balsam or Peru Balsam. Containing benzoic acid, cinnamic acid, farnesol, and diverse esters and resins, the oil possesses some therapeutic properties as a balsamic and anti-inflammatory, though in some individuals it can provoke dermatitis. Used in perfumery and medicine, it has limited magical application in operations of Attraction and is most suited for use as an aphrodisiac perfume or unguent for its fragrance and topical action.

Balsam of Tolu (*Myroxylon balsamum* var. *balsamum*) also known as Opobalsam or Resin Tolu, is a cultivar of Balsam of Peru with minor morphological differences. its properties are similar, but gentler and more subtle, having a more feminine, floral atmosphere. It is balsamic, anti-inflammatory, and a circulatory stimulant. The oil or resin is useful in workings of Attraction and love-charms.

BALSAM POPLAR

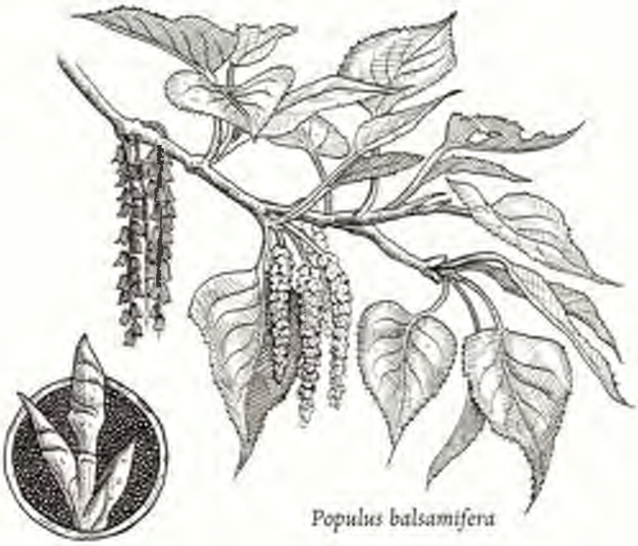
Populus balsamifera; Populus × candicans

Salicaceæ (Willow Family)

BALSAM Poplar is a deciduous tree growing to 30 meters in height, with gray, furrowed bark and flat, scaly ridges. Widely distributed across the northern border of the United States, from the northern Rocky Mountains, across Canada to Alaska, its odorous, balsamic buds are one of North America's great native medicines. In the commerce of modern herbalism, most of what is sold commercially in North America as 'Balm of Gilead' is in fact the fragrant resin-rich winter buds of the Balsam Poplar hybrid *Populus × jackii.*

In medicine, it is anti-inflammatory and antiseptic. Native Americans used the herb for the treatment of noxious skin complaints, and resin derived from the buds may be compounded for an excellent cough elixir. Ozark mountain medicine makes use of the fragrant buds cooked in fat as a soothing unguent for hemorrhoids.

Native American pharmacopoeias esteem Balsam Poplar as an occasional additive to tobacco mixtures or *kinnickkinnick*, and the Karok have used the leaves of the plant as a Love Medicine.



Populus balsamifera

The distinctive balsam-turpentine aroma of the buds is suitable for both potpourri and incense, as it burns true.

BANANA

Musa spp.

Musaceæ (Banana Family)

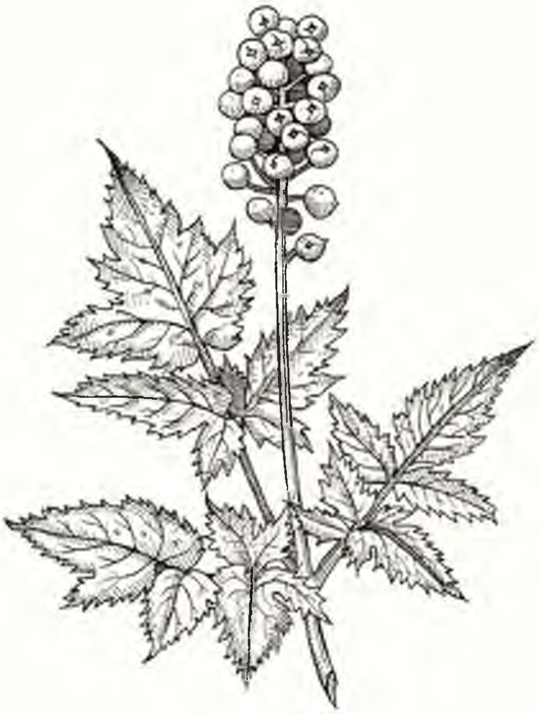
MUSACEAE, the Banana's botanical family, possesses but two genera, that being *Musa* and *Ensete*, both originally endemic to Asia. The members of this group are gross herbs thriving in very warm climates and requiring rich alluvial soil. Bananas are grown chiefly for food, fiber, and ornament; most edible cultivars are sterile, having been vegetatively propagated from ancient, wild seed-bearing ancestors. The genus *Musa* contains 66 accepted species.

In magic, it is used in operations of Fertility, Allure, Lust and Wealth. Its golden, nourishing and phallic qualities ally it with the power of the Sun, and its alignments with fecundity and love embody the Some traditions

In India, both the Plantain and Banana tree are sacred and highly auspicious. Infertile women may pray to, worship, or propitiate the spirit of either to conceive a child, and the leaves and fruit are employed in Hindu marriage rites. Hoodoo traditions of North America contain a womens' charm for attracting men, using a bit of Banana peel placed by the front door.

In Malay and Indonesian folklore, Banana trees are the diurnal habitations of the *Pontianak*, female vampiric spirits known for their ferocity, and their ultimate genesis in stillbirth. Nocturnal in habit, and especially active at the full moon, they lure men with the glamor of ravishing beauty, then kill their prey by disembowelment and consumption of the organs.

Nwenge, a traditional African beer made from Banana, is used as a festive sacrament, as well as in libation for new building sites, gardens, and to propitiate the ghosts of the ancestors. In Scandinavia, modern charms to appease trolls employ plates heaped with Bananas and cream.



BANEBERRY

Actaea rubra—Red Baneberry
A. alba—White Baneberry; six other spp.
Ranunculaceæ (Buttercup Family)

BANEBERRY is a perennial to 1 meter high, preferring a greater or lesser degree of shade, and growing in the Rocky Mountains of the United States, as well as the plains of Alberta, west to California and south to New Mexico. It puts forth a knotted rhizome and whitish flowers, eventually producing berries of black or red. The leaves are characteristic of the Crowfoot group. The genus is circumpolar.

It is also known by the folk names Doll's Eyes and Snakeberry; *Actaea rubra* especially is known as Toad-Root, recollecting its power of raising blisters on the skin, and its kinship with Hellebore, a plant linked chemically to toads and their poisonous secretions. The rhizome is acrid and bitter, and has great notoriety as an extreme irritant, vesicant, purgative and emetic. Like legion other plants of the Buttercup kin, the foliage provokes contact dermatitis. *A. spicata*, Common Baneberry, is perhaps the most obstreperous species in terms of its capacity for irritation. In some systems of folk healing it was substituted for Hellebore, with which it shares the characteristic of being a drastic purgative. It has also commanded medical respect as an emmenagogue and antirheumatic.

Among Native American and First Nations in North America, the White Baneberry was employed to treat diseases of men; the Red was utilized for syphilis and rheumatism. Folk medicine formerly esteemed the tincture of the venomous *Actaea spicata* externally, for rheumatism.

Ranunculin, a toxic glycoside, is one of the principal poisons. Symptoms of poisoning, usually from eating the berry, can include vomiting, diarrhea, bloating and irritation of the digestive organs, stupor and delirium. Poisoning is usually not fatal, but recovery is lengthy.

Among the Cheyenne, *A. rubra* is known as Sweet Medicine, named after their beloved prophet. The plant is recognized as his apotheosis, or botanical avatar, as all of his power suffused the herb after his death.

The plant was used magically for blinding enemies. The root was chewed, then blown in each of the four directions, then finally to the enemy. Medicine bundles containing a mixture of Red Baneberry and *Artemisia* species were used as a burnt incense to expel accursed spirits, phantasms, and recurring nightmares.

BARBERRY

Berberis vulgaris; *Berberis* spp.
Berberidaceæ (Barberry Family)

THE Jaundice Tree, better known as Barberry, is a hardy shrub ubiquitous to many regions of the United States, being a deciduous and growing to 3 meters in height, with dentate leaves and long drooping chains of yellow flowers in the springtime. The bitter bark is of a yellow color, which yields a true dye; the oblong red berries, ripening in June, possess a pleasant, acrid taste. There are many varieties of Barberry available at common nurseries, varying in their medicinal properties, but allied in magical virtue, many have dark maroon leaves. Prepared juice of the berries yielded *Agresta*, a purifying beverage used in late medieval European medicine.

As an apothecary's drug, the berries and bark were used to treat conditions of the liver and spleen. The laxative berries possess a cooling energetic and have been used to reduce fever. A tea of the bark or stems, blended with hard cider and taken in dose of 60 ml, taken 3 times daily, was an old remedy for jaundice, as well as a liver tonic in smaller doses. The plant contains the isoquinoline alkaloid berberine ($C_{20}H_{18}NO_4+$), and the herb's overall action on the body are hepatic, vasodilator, antibacterial, anti-inflammatory, and laxative. In Persian cuisine, the tart berry, known as *zereshk*, is an esteemed addition to such savory dishes as Tahcheen-e Morgh.

Its prime powers in sorcery is Protection from Maleficia and Exorcism, and it embodies in most respects the celestial emanations of Mars. Hedges of Barberry, or plantings just outside the dwelling, are traditionally planted to keep away witches. In Kashmir the roots, leaves, and fruits of *Berberis lycium* and used to repel evil spirits. In English lore, Barberry should not be planted to near a wheatfield, as its presence was thought to bring the blight.

The Spirit-Retinue of Barberry

Expurgation, Hypervigilance, Entrenchment, Conquest, Brightness, Jealousy, Withdrawal, Interment, Ambush, Scorched Earth, Salted Farmland, Rearguard Manœuvres, and Burning Peripheries.

BASIL

Ocimum basilicum

Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

A MAGNIFICENT effusion of scent characterizes Sweet Basil, released when the leaves are bruised, possessing qualities that are rousing, stimulating to the mind, and uplifting. The plant is a tender annual with fragrant, spicy leaves and white, whorled flowers typical of the herbaceous Lamiaceae. Common in kitchen-herb gardens, in milder climates the plant may become woody and overwinter, but where this occurs, leaf-crops in successive years are often lower.

Leaves and flowers are used in medicine, magic, religious devotion, and for culinary purposes; essential oil of the French variety is also recommended. It exhibits action on the body as an adrenal stimulant, carminative, cephalic, digestive, emmenagogue, expectorant, nervine, prophylactic, stimulant, stomachic, and aphrodisiac. Its aromatic phytochemical fractions include linalol, methyl chavicol, eugenol, and other phenols. The herb should be picked in Autumn, the entire plant collected while flowering.

In the doctrine of planetary correspondence, Sweet Basil is aligned with Mars and Jupiter, the actions of both planets tempered by Venus. In magical tradition, it is ascribed the powers of Love, Allure, Protection from Maleficia, Exorcism, Meditation, Illumination, and Fidelity. Basil is also strongly associated with the power of Death in many traditions and is used in Funerary rites and magic.

Pliny considered Sweet Basil to be an aphrodisiac, and it was given to horses and donkeys at the time of mating. Infusion of Basil is used in Vodun as a fertility charm for men, the potion sprinkled on the conjugal bed and the phallus liberally anointed. Several species of Basil, including O. *canum* and O. *gratissimum*, are used in the Candomblé practices of Brazil.

The Spirit-Retinue of Basil

Effervescence, Arousal, Delight, Royalty, Subtlety, Continuity, Revival, Intrigue, Solemnity, Yearning, Sanctified Restitution, Dawning Epiphany, and Arcadian Embodiment.

The herb resonates with the ancestral dead as reflected in a wide arc of magical use. In Greece, priests fling holy water with a sprig of Basil to rebuke and expel the *kallikantzaroi*, the chthonian earth-spirits appearing from Christmas through the Epiphany to harass humanity. The Basil sprig or hand-broom, made from several sprigs bound with thread, recurs throughout the folk magic of Eastern Europe and Italy as an essential sorcerous weapon. It is similarly used in traditional Peruvian folk magic, both as a whole plant and as an aqueous extract, for warding off evil and reſtoring spiritual peace to individuals afflicted with negative influences.

The ancient Greeks associated Basil with hate, poverty, and misfortune. Some ancient Greek and Roman lore relate that the plant will grow only if it is sown with curses; the modern French idiom *semer le basilic*, meaning 'sowing the Basil', denotes ranting and raving. In medieval England, the herb was used in burial ceremonies; in Eaſtern Europe, sprigs of Basil were put onto shrouds, caskets, and graves. Numerous rites in Indonesia employ various Basils to propitiate spirits and the dead, sometimes by ſtrewing leaves in graveyards or planting the herb on graves. Strong decoctions of the leaf are used in Hoodoo as an apotropaic wash. Its simpleſt usage for this purpose is to gather an abundance of fresh leaves and add them to the bath, using them as the sole lavage to scrub the skin. Alternately, if a greater perfume is desired, one may rub the bare skin with broken leaves after a hot bath or prepare Basil in a ſtrong decoction. This may be made by boiling 140 grams of the fresh leaf, ſtem and flower in one liter of water for four minutes, then ſtraining the liquid and allowing it to cool.

BARLEY

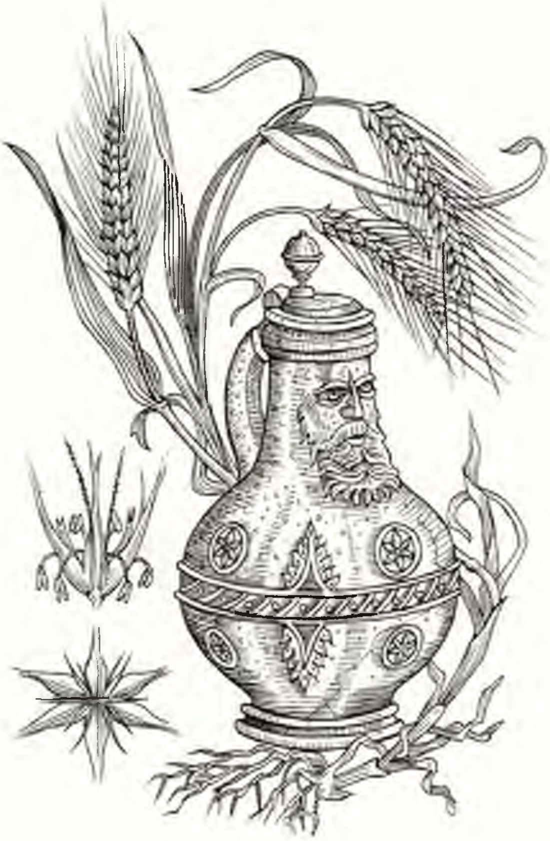
Hordeum vulgare; H. diſtichum

Poaceæ (Grass Family)

BARLEY is tall annual grass of the Hordeae tribe, preferring damp soils. One of the very oldeſt cultivated cereal grains, *Hordeum vulgare* rarely appears in the wild, though other *Hordeum* species, such as Foxtail Barley, readily thrive in ruſtic environs. Its conſtitution is ruled by Saturn, and its power acts upon the body as a nutritive, and a mild nervine. Count Rumford, the 18th century scientiſt, polymath and inventor, referred to Barely as "the rice of Great Britain."

Beer, the zymurgic product of fermenting malted barley grain with water, is an ancient tradition long atteſted in the archaeological record. The Ebla tablets, conſtituting the beſt-preserved library in the Near Eaſt of the third millennium BCE, reflect a diversity of beers in production. It was a much-eſteemd font of inspiration, inebriation, and refreshment among Celtic and Germanic tribes, and was sometimes augmented by potent, inebriating herbs such as Henbane, Mandrake, and Ledum. In ancient Babylon, the goddesses Siris and Siduri were the patronesses of beer, brewing, and Wisdom; later replaced by Ninkasi.

For the brewer of ales and beers, a colossal array of prepared barley is available, including Pale, Golden, Amber, British Black Patent, and Chocolate to name but a few. Malt syrup, made from malted barley kernels, is of especial value not only in fermentation and diſtillation, but also in baking, for it contains maltose, a sugar with unique properties produced by sprouting grains. In the British Isles, it is also used for making bread and bannock. Barley is the key grain used for both Irish and Scotch whiskies and is essential to their diſtinctive characters, it is also added to the mashbills of Bourbon and other American whiskies.



There is evidence Barley was given as a funerary offering in ancient England. Anglo-Saxon penitentials, such as that of Archbishop Theodore, forbid the heathen practice of burning grain on the grave of a dead man. This practice was also undertaken to assure protection for the surviving relatives.

In ancient Lithuania, in times of drought, the people invoked the help of Perkunas, god of thunder and lightning. When rain was needed, they assembled in the depths of the woods, ate and drank, and sacrificed a black heifer, a black he-goat, and a black cock to the god. They carried a bowl of beer thrice round a fire, then soused the fire with the liquor, while entreating the god to send showers.

Numerous European traditions surround the gathering of the final sheaf of corn at the end of the harvest season. Grain from this final sheaf is often woven into Corn Dollies, beautiful charms in the forms of maidens, boars, wolves, and other animals. The charm embodies the spirit of the entire corn crop, and is retained to assure future fertility, until the plowing begins with the next growing season.

> EGYPTIAN LOVE POTION
>
> A potion. You take a little shaving of the head of a man who has died a violent death, together with seven grains of barley that has been buried in the grave of a dead man; you pound them with ten oipe, otherwise nine, (of) apple-seeds; you add blood of a worm...(and) of a black dog to them, with a little blood of your second finger (that) of the heart, of your left hand, and with your semen, and you pound them together and put them into a cup of wine and add three utch to it of the first fruits of the vintage, before you have tasted it and before they have poured out from it; and you pronounce this invocation to it seven times and you make a woman drink it...
>
> *The Leyden Papyrus*
> 3rd Century AD

CORRESPONDENCES

Magical Powers: Wealth.
Element: Earth.
Planet: Saturn.
Deific Forms: John Barleycorn, Ninkisi.
Virtue: Sacrifice, resurrection.
Sacrament: Beer.
Corporeal Zone: Entire Body.
Corporeal Action: Sustenance.
Medicament: Nutritive, Nervine.
Eponymous Compounds: Hordenine—$C_{10}H_{15}NO$.
Emblem: a golden-brown Wildman, with a cup in his right hand and a sickle his left.

BAYBERRY

Myrica gale, *M. cerifera*, *M. pennsylvanica*
Myrtaceæ (Myrtle family)

THE genus *Myrica* comprises approximately 40 species of shrubs and trees with cosmopolitan distribution. Wax Myrtle or Candleberry, as Bayberry is also known, is a small tree having narrow leaves, tapering at the end; the stems are covered with a grayish bark, thickly-branched at the top. The fruits, varying in color from white to red to purple, exude a scented 'wax'—in actuality a vegetable tallow—which has long been used to make candles. Leaves of the type species, Bog Myrtle (*Myrica gale*), were historically used to make a traditional 'Gale Beer', much prized for its powers of perpetual youth and regeneration.

Its pharmaceutical properties are astringent, alterative, and stimulant, these virtues concentrated in the leaf and rootbark. The tree enjoys extensive Native American medicinal use as an anti-inflammatory, carminitive, vermifuge, and as a specific in cases of prolapsed uterus. Bayberry has been used to treat typhoid dysentery, jaundice and scrofula: it also makes an excellent sore-throat gargle in the dosage of 2 g of the rootbark powder every three to four hours. The essential oil contains α-pinene, myrcine, limonene, p-cymene, linalool, caryophyllene, and myricine.

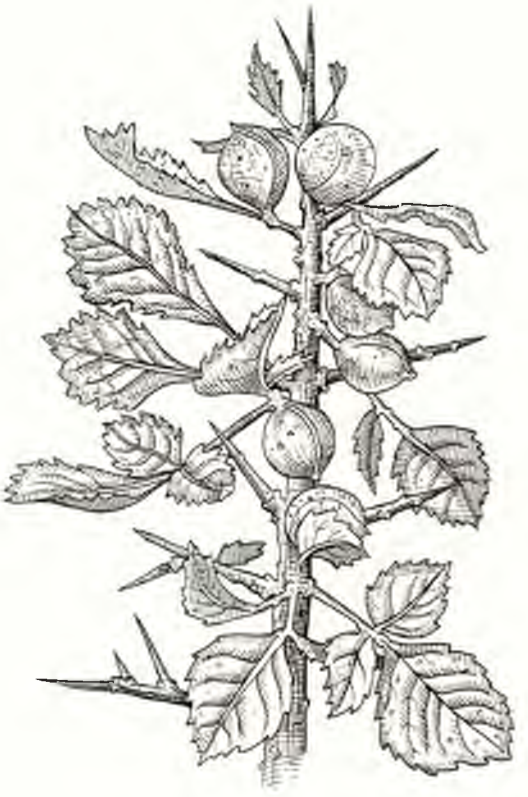
As manifest in its folk magical usage, Bayberry has been used for its powers of sexual attraction, drawing wealth, dispelling evil, and charisma. In North American traditions, the Creeks valued Bayberry as a potent charm for exorcising restless spirits of the departed, as well as for keeping out spirits of disease. One traditional usage secretly places the leaves of *Myrica* beneath the pillow at night, so that the seeker might receive prophetic dreams of his or her future lover. Some folk magical usages burn the candles to attract money and favorable luck. In Eastern Africa, the roots of some some Bayberry species are valued as talismans, worn on the body as protection from evil spirits.

The natural 'wax' produced by the plant is collected by floating the fruits in boiling water and skimming the tallow off the surface, then subjecting the whole to refinement; some sources report a yield of 2 kg of wax to a bushel of the berries. The process is highly aromatic, as the wax contains a number of resins and glycerides.

Although increasingly rare, true Bayberry candles are vastly more atmospheric than paraffin. For those who have the means, stewarding the tree is encouraged, as is the Art of the Chandler.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF BAYBERRY

Effulgence, Jejunity, Affability, Solicitation, Persuasion, Lustre, Enrichment, Gravitation, Abstergency, Genial Overture, Fragrant Armoring, Beckoning Arousal, and Dark Foreshadowings.



BDELLIUM, AFRICAN

Commiphora africana

Burseraceæ (Torchwood Family)

A RUGGED, thorny tree inhabiting sub-Saharan Africa, and ethnobotanically important in local magic, medicine, food, soil conservation and perfumery. Its aromatic resin *bdellion* appears in ancient occult incense formulae and is also known as Gum Bdellium. Greenish black in color, when smoldered as a perfume, its rustic fragrance is redolent of Myrrh, though somewhat less complex. Resin bearing the name *bdellion* is also sourced from the related Guggul tree (*Commiphoara wightii*), while in Egypt 'Gum Bdellium' has also been extracted from the unrelated Doum Palm (*Hyphaene thebaica*).

Though the present examination focuses on African Bdellium, many resins have been known in Africa by the name Bdellium, each being a different species of the Myrrh genus *Commiphora*. Among these are Perfumed Bdellium or Haba Ghadi, Hotai Bdellium, and Opaque Bdellium. Ancient magical texts and formularies, when they do not specify the precise origin of the gum, may refer to any of these kinds, as all of these burseraceous shrubs all produce fragrant resins.

The gum contains antiseptic and drawing properties, indications that its disinfectant action may translate from the material to the spiritual plane. In Somalia, Bdellium is used medicinally to concentrate and empty boils, carbuncles, abcesses, and topical sores, which are dressed with bark after being incised. The gum products are used frequently in Arabian medicine as a stypic, and burned as an insecticide in Africa.

Aside from its medicinal use, Bdellium resin is best known in magical formulæ as a powerful incense, often aligned with the planetary emanations Saturn. It is chiefly used for protection, summoning beneficial spirits, or repelling evil influences. The fragrant smoke also has repute as a traditional aphrodisiac.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF AFRICAN BEDELLIUM

Conduction, Chastisement, Intractability, Dessication, Sustenation, Galling Crasis, Irascible Inclination, Suppurative Swellings, Heroic Remedy, Sweet Acridity, Precipitous Arousal, Intemperate Sortilege and Vigilant Stricture.

BDELLIUM, INDIAN

Commiphora wightii

Burseraceæ (Torchwood Family)

NATIVE to India, Pakistan and North Africa, *Guggulu* or Guggul is a gnarled shrub or small tree growing to 3-4 meters, mantled about with thorns. The granulated resin, obtained by wounding the bark, is of a black or umber color, and when burnt exudes a balsamic, and mildly acrid scent. Because of the interest the plant has garnered due to its medicinal uses, the tree is critically endangered due to overharvesting of wild populations, as well as habitat loss due to mining and grazing. Conservation efforts are underway on many fronts.

Its attributed therapeutic properites are anti-imflammatory, antioxidant, calmative, diuretic, respiratory tonic, and uterine tonic. This medicament is also used in treatment of atherosclerosis, hyperthyroidism, and elevated cholesterol levels. Sallakie, an Ayurvdeic medicament of Bdellium, is used to treat arthritis.

Serving chiefly as a ward against noxious spirits, its magical properties as an incense also include Exorcism and Protection from Malefica. It has also traditionally served in an oblative capacity as a religious offering.

BEANS

Phaseolus spp.

Fabaceæ (Pea Family)

AN annual of erect, bushy habit or yet having the predilections of a trailing vine; attaining a maximum height of 3.5 meters. Summer flowers of various colors give way to seed-containing pods. There are numerous edible species, each further divided into a diversity of cultivars. Some species are important food crops, being important sources of vitamins, proteins, and fiber. The pods have been utilized in some medical applications to help reduce excessive blood pressure.

Beans are often attended by suspicion, curse and taboo, and many members of the pea family are at least mildly toxic to humans. For example, the Fava Bean, so important as a foodstuff in the Mediterranean, may adversely affect some persons being deficient in the enzyme glucose-6-phosphate-dehydrogenase; the condition is known as *favism.* The condition is marked by destruction of red blood cells, hypoxia, anemia, and genereal debility.

Some have advanced favism as a possible reason for the ancient prohibition on eating beans by Pythagoras. Some European religions and folk traditions maintain that Beans contain the shades of the dead. This may be because of the seed's resemblance to an embryo, but another legend persists concerning Pythagoras. It is said that he refused to eat beans because he believed that, upon death, some souls would transmigrate to the seeds nestled within Bean pods. Similarly, Hippocrates preached against them, for he considered Beans injurious to the sight. Cicero avoided the Bean as well, for it "corrupted the blood and inflamed the passions." According to Artemidorus, beans are a symbol of discord because of the flatulence they engender and were thus banned from festivals and holy places. Beans were among a list of foods forbidden to celebrants during the Eleusinian mysteries.

> *The Egyptians do not cultivate beans in their country at all, and any beans that grow there are not eaten raw or cooked. Priests cannot even stand the sight of beans, since they consider them to be an impure form of legume.*
>
> HERODOTUS
> *The Histories*

In occult usage, Beans are frequently used in magical operations of death and funerary rites. Other uses in sorcery are often malefic, such as spells to cause insanity, but Beans are also used in divination and charms of invisibility. Arnoldo de Villanova, writing in the early 14th century, describes a curse in which several beans are placed beneath the bed or beside the door, in order to bring misfortune upon a house's inhabitant.

To propitiate demons and shades of the dead, some sorcerers strewed bean-blossoms, particularly in the traditions of Eastern Asia. Another spell employed Black Beans, left in a consecrated vessel in a lonely or otherwise forlorn location, to pacify the spirits of the Dead. One Hindu spell of exorcism involves casting Beans onto the body of a possessed person to drive out evil spirits.

The ancient Greek authority Disocorides reports magical use of Chickpea for the destruction of warts. On a new moon one pea is rubbed on a wart, then bound in a linen cloth and commanded to reverse; the wart falls away soon after. Also among his reports was the use of Bean Trefoil (*Anagyris foetida*) as a protective charm for women in childbirth, the bean discarded after labor. In Italian curing magic, a dry bean is rubbed on a wart, then removed to a hidden place. As the bean rotted, the wart would dissolve.

A Russian charm for immobilizing horses requires that the *koldun* or sorcerer throw a pea or bean-pod with nine seeds into the straw of a sledge. This particular charm is noted as being used by sorecerers against wedding-processions.

In ancient Islamic sorcery, the ferocious creature known as the *Tasheer* is generated from a blood-soaked bean inserted into womb of an ass and gestated three months.

> Whence the brains for this foul creature?
> From a mighty torrent's foaming.
> Whence its sense obtained the monster?
> From a furious cataract's foaming.
> Whence a head, this foul enchantment?
> From the bean, a bean all rotten.
>
> *Kalevala*

The 6th centrury Welsh bard Taliesin describes a great battle in which several plants took place, including Oak, Holly, Elm and Hawthorn. The Bean participated as well, "bearing in its shade an army of phantoms". According to the Scots poet Montgomerie, witches rode to their Sabbats on beanstalks.

An old omen of English gardeners observes that if one bean in a row should come up white instead of green, a death is imminent. A native system of bean-divination similar to geomancy is practiced in Russia, using forty-one Beans; and, as noted by scholar W.F. Ryan, a similar system in Iran uses fifty-three peas.

The Spirit-Retune of Beans

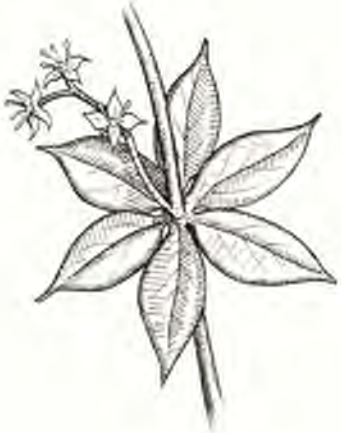
Permeability, Absorption, Nutriment, Potentiality, Diffusion, Rupture, Discord, Spoilage, Bloviation, Afflatus, Oracular Utterance, Spirit Possession, and Malicious Aggregation.

BEARDTONGUE

Penstemon barbatus spp. *torreyi*
Plantaginaceæ (Plantain Family)

ALSO known as Scarlet Bugler, Beardtongue is a short-lived perennial with a clumping habitus, linear leaves, and scarlet flowers growing to 1 meter in height; it is common throughout the chaparral and arid woodlands of the Southwestern states of North America. Taxonomically, it was formerly classed among the Scrophulariaceae. A number of cultivars are sold as ornamentals, prized for their ostentatious floral display, some of which are yellow, pink or salmon colored. The plant is nectar-rich, and also attracts hummingbirds and butterflies.

In Native American plant traditions, Beardtongue (*P. barbatus*) had a number of potent spiritual uses, including magical medicine. It was used by the Zuñi as a hunting charm: the masticated root was used to smear the rabbit-stick to ensure success in the hunt. The stick thus charmed and anointed, when thrown, was certain to kill its prey, "provided the thrower had a good heart." It was also used by the White Mountain Apache as a Witchcraft Medicine.



BEDSTRAW

Galium spp.
Rubiaceæ (Madder Family)

A SUCCULENT-STEMMED, creeping plant growing both vertically and horizontally according to fancy, having whorled leaves and tiny white flowers. The entirety of the herb is covered with tiny, sticky hairs which cause it to cleave to surrounding vegetation, as well as passers-by. Many rhizomes from this genus yield red dyes, as with numerous herbs of the Madder family. Prominent species include *Galium aparine* (Goosegrass); *G. asprellum* (Rough Bedstraw) and *G. verum* (Lady's Bedstraw); as a botanical genus it is quite large, with well over 600 indivdual species documented. Insidious in habit, Bedstraw is a garden weed whose presence I nonetheless welcome, for its handsome form, medicinal and magical principles, and peaceable emanation. In doctrines of planetary correspondence, it is governed both by the Moon and Venus, and its elemental affinity is aqueous.

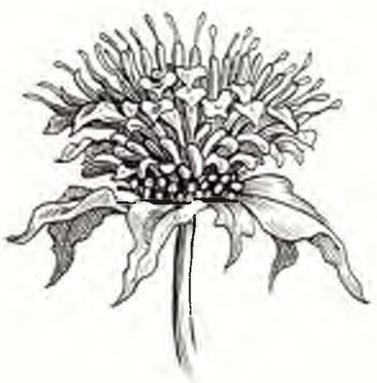
Rustic medicine and folk remedies have long prized Bedstraw as an antiseptic, diuretic, hepatic, and mild sedative. Possessing considerable lymphatic action, Bedstraw also tonifies and cleanses the skin when applied topically, especially the scalp. *Galium* species have been in use as an antiscorbutic for two thousand years; a strong infusion of the herb is an excellent spring tonic. It is best picked before flowering; the Welsh *Meddygon Myddfai* advise us that the best time to gather the plant is in the deep of Winter, from the Feast of St. Andrew to Candlemas. A hot infusion is made with 100 g of the fresh herb to a liter of water, letting it stand for 3 hours to infuse, after which it may be drunk at pleasure. I have seen Bedstraw, particularly G. *triflorum* and G. *verum*, used succesfully as an emmenagogue, and in a few cases as an abortifacient. The chemistry of *Galium* species is complex, but often includes coumarins, flavonoids, pheolic acids, glycosides, and caffeine.

> *The decoction of the herb called Lady's Bedstraw, being yet warm, is of admirable use to bathe the feet of Travellers...*
>
> WILLIAM COLES
> *Adam in Eden, 1671*

Its magical virtue is principally that of love, bonding, and attachment, as its very nature is to adehere. In North America, some Native American tribes used the dried flowers of G. *triflorum* to perfume their personal belongings; its sticky leaves were also used as a love-drawing charm, artfully entwined with the hairs of the one desired. An old divination favored by boys sought omens from sprigs of Bedstraw thrown onto the backs of girls. If the plant clung to the lass, she had a sweetheart; if it fell off, she did not.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF BEDSTRAW

Hankering, Flirtation, Ease, Entanglement, Dalliance, Plot-Weaving, Innocent Laughter, Hopeful Excursions, Temporal Fancies, Effusive Chatter, Sexual Display, & Erotic Idylls.



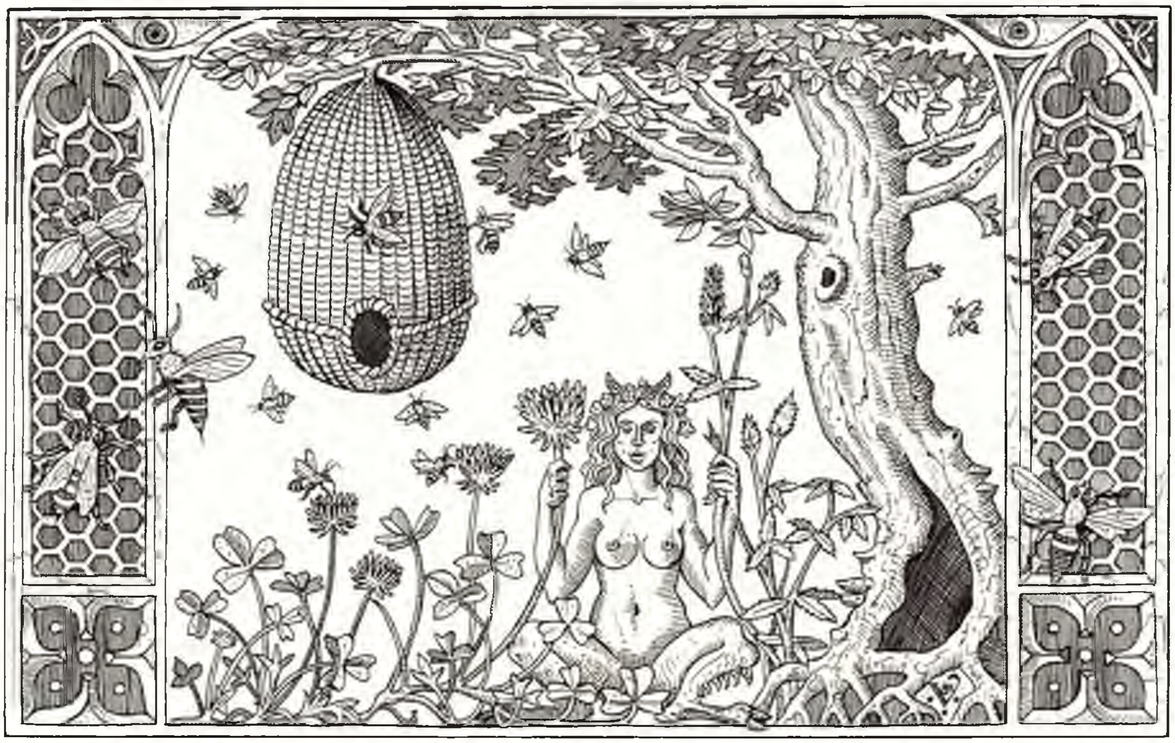
BEE BALM

Monarda spp.
Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

THE genus *Monarda* contains about 12 species of perennial, clumping herbs growing to just under 1 meter in height, with strong aromatic principles in the leaves, and pink to scarlet flowers. The entirety of the genus is native to North America. The portions of the plant used in medicine, ritual and perfumery are the leaves, flowers, and their essential oil. At one time in America 'essential oil of Bergamot' used *Monarda* as its source, though this is not considered true Bergamot, which originates in the leaves of *Citrus aurantium* var. *bergamia*, a type of Orange tree. The aroma of Bee Balm is sweet and floral, and redolent of musk.

In medicine, it is diuretic, stimulant, antiseptic, carminative, digestive, emmenagogue, and a mild expectorant. Various Bee Balms have enjoyed minor medicinal use among Native Americans, especially for allaying pains in the guts, and *colic infantum*.

Several species of Bee Balm enjoyed considerable veneration for their powers in magic and ceremony. *Monarda fistulosa* was especially esteemed, its uses encompassing alluring perfumes, ritual food, and ceremonial diaphoretics in sweat lodges. The Kutenai smoldered the leaves on heated rocks as a powerful fumigant in sweat houses; the plant was also treasured as a sacred incense, together with needles of Pine, by the Cheyenne. An infusion of Bee Balm was used by the Iroquois as a stimulant, and the Creeks valued it as Witchcraft Medicine, a decoction thereof being used as a wash to protect against ghosts. *M. fistulosa* was also used by the Lakota as a love charm.



The Bequest of the Pure Ones

HONEY, PLANTS, AND THE MEDICAMENT OF SWEETNESS

THE spiritual essence of honey, borne out in aeons of myth, religious practice, magical formulae and medical receipts is that of arousal: the enlivening, or awakening, of fleshly stasis. This living emanation or radiance assumes many forms, from the refreshing to the erotic, to attracting spirits and gods, to resurrection of the Dead itself.

Medicinally, Honey preserves and defends against pathogens, and its property of arousing serves to awaken injured flesh and speed healing. As a nutritive, it is an important source of carbohydrate, vitamins, and minerals—all of which arouse the flagging homeostasis.

The arousing power of Honey, so often aligned with the erotic arcanum, is linked to its origin in the nectar of flowers, the procreative morphological specialization of plants. By this route of understanding, nectar emerges from the botanical sex organ, and is analogous to human sexual secretions, particularly to vaginal lubricant in the female and pre-ejaculate in the male, as the fluidic media necessary for fertilization. Honey shares sexual correspondence with the pheromone, as flower nectar serves as an attractant to pollinators. This correlates to the gamete-bearing agency of sexual reproduction.

THE GOLDEN HEPTARCHY

The seven species of honey-producing bees

Giant Honeybee	*Apis dorsata*
Western Honeybee	*Apis mellifera*
Asian Honeybee	*Apis cerana*
Koschevnikov's Bee	*Apis koschevnikovi*
Philippine Honeybee	*Apis nigrocincta*
Red Dwarf Honeybee	*Apis florea*
Black Dwarf Honeybee	*Apis andreniformis*

In ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, honey was employed magically to propitiate the spirits of the Dead; Herodotus notes that embalming the body with honey was a funerary custom in ancient Babylonia. In Greece, Honey was left as offerings at the Oracle of the Dead, and the shades carried with them honey-cakes to appease Cerberus. Oblations of Honey, water and milk were offered to the Nymphs and Muses, occasionally with twigs of Cretan Thyme (*Thymbra capitata*); traditional offerings to the Moirai or the Fates included honey-cakes and white Almonds, usually left in caves. Honey-cakes were given to Erechtheus, the serpent guardian-spirit of the Acropolis. Ancient Babylonian oblations frequently included honey, dates, and grain.

Elevating its preservative aspects was a Græco-Roman funerary custom of burying children in pots filled with honey. *Kolyva*, a ritual food made from of seeds of Pomegranate, Wheat, Raisins, Currants, Honey, and spices, was made in ancient Greece to propitiate chthonic deities such as Persephone and Poseidon. The food is still made today on All Souls' Day, where girls and women dressed in black bear the offering to cemeteries and sprinkle it on graves.

In addition to its resonance with erotic magic, it is particularly aligned with women, an aspect strongly reflected by the orgin of its production. Honey and sesame cakes in the shape of female genitalia were offered to Demeter at the Thesmorphia festival, and in Old Egyptian gynecology, honey was employed to restore prolapsed uteri. In some traditions, the ecstatic god Dionysos was wild reared by Nymphs and fed on Honey, but it was theirs to dispense, and his to receive.

In ancient Greece, honey-based remedies, in the form of wines and other concentrated medicaments, were popular. The *hydromelon* was a venerated honey wine, to which fruits were added. A formula compounded from snow and honey, for treating febrile patients, was known as *chionomlei*. A particularly evocative formula was the *rhodomel*, prepared from concentrated honey and the petals of mountain roses. A magical Theriac for healing the bite of a mad dog, is found in *The Leyden Papyrus*, created from Rue pounded with honey.

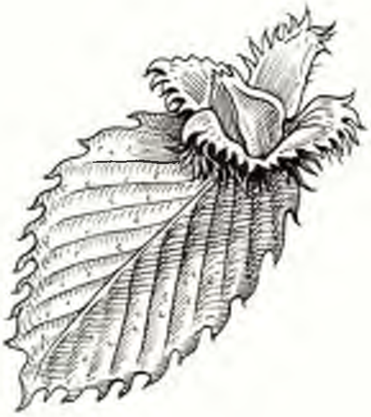
Honey may be considered an alchemical transmutation of the spirits of the land, containing as it does the pollens and nectars of myriad flowers. Blossoms legendary as apiary forage include Clovers (*Trifolium*), Buckwheats (*Fagopyrum esculentum*), Orange (*Citrus × sinensis*), Alfalfa (*Medicago sativa*), Tupelo (*Nyssa sylvatica*) and scores of *Eucalyptus* species. However, wildflower honeys, derived from a vast admixture of seasonal forage, are often even better, and their variability provides a brief portrait of the land, concentrated in a golden elixir.

Bees are wise and discerning spirits, and consideration of them should be made when planning one's own medicine garden, providing plants for forage. In devising such a garden, allow a space free of pesticides, and plant choices which stagger flowering cycles over different seasons, to allow continual forage throughout the year. Thought should also be given to wild bees, whether they are honeybees, or the great multitude of bee types that do not produce honey but play essential ecological roles. The following list of bee plants has been formulated to include plants with valuable occult properties.

ESSENTIAL HERBS FOR THE BEE GARDEN

Alkanet
Aster
Basil
Bee Balm
Blackberry
Borage
Calamint
Calendula
Clover
Columbine
Comfrey
Coriander
Coyote Mint
Crocus
Daisy
Devil's Bit
Echinacea
Foxglove
Germander
Hawthorn
Hazel
Heather
Hollyhock
Honeysuckle
Hyacinth
Hyssop
Indigo
Ivy
Lavender
Lily of the Valley
Linden
Mints
Mullein
Mustard
Onion
Poppy
Rose
Rosemary
Sage
Squill
Thyme
Viper's Bugloss
Willow
Yarrow

When honeybees forage on certain venomous plants, the deadly virtues of those herbs can be transferred to the honey, and in some cases, the alchemical transformation of nectar into honey would seem to potentiate the poison. An example of this occured circa 400 BCE, when a Greek mercenary army returning through Pontus was poisoned by *Mainomenon*, a honey whose chief source of pollen and nectar was a toxic *Rhododendron* species. A large number of the soldiers fell unconscious, and some perished. Two of the poisonous species endemic to the area are *Rhododendron luteum* and *Rhododendron ponticum*. Henbane, Jessamine (*Gelsimium*) and other plants may also yield poisonous honey.



BEECH

Fagus spp.
Fagaceæ (Beech Family)

The genus *Fagus* encompasses ten species of deciduous hardwoods, all distributed in northern-temperate regions of the world. The trees are tall, stately in appearance, and sturdy in composition, their grand and spreading silhouette generally indicating their morphological relation to the Oaks, with which they share a botanical family. The type species, *Fagus sylvatica*, or the European Beech, generally grows to 40 meters (though some individuals may reach 50), with simple, alternately arranged leaves. Beeches thrive in alkaline soils and produce an abundance of edible nuts which also may be expressed for their oil. *Fagus grandiflora* is the native North American Beech, and several of the tree species are found in northern Asia. In medicine, Native American healers sometimes employed the tree to treat frostbite. The Iroquois used its bark to induce abortion; and a decoction of the leaves was sometimes applied as poultice to burns or scalds. In Europe and England, it was also valued for this astringent medicinal quality, much in the same manner as Oak. The nut yields a valuable oil, for which it was pressed in times past.

The Beech stands within the court of Saturn, owing to the *gravitas* of its dominance of the forest, the density of its wood, and the strange nature of the shadows cast by its branches. This ponderous state is, however, balanced by its nutritive quality, and the livelihood of its attendant spirit-host. It thus also exhibits many qualities of Jupiter, with which it is sometimes linked in occult correspondence.

In ancient Rome, Bacchus was known to drink his wine from beechwood bowls, and on the Hill of Corne in Tusculum stood a grove of Beeches sacred to Diana. Indeed, the Beech's vast, domed canopy conveys the twin virtues of sacrality and sanctuary, essential attributes of the temple.

Its qualities are absorptive and capacious, having the requisite aspects of protection, containment and providing safe haven. Its hardwood is suitable for working, particularly for *simulacra* of spirits or gods, while the bark provided paper for the ancient sacred books of Northern Europe. The names of the tree in Germanic languages also align with the concept of 'book'.

The Spirit-Retinue of Beech

Reception, Retention, Marginality, Osmosis, Umbrage, Capacity, Congestion, Dissimulation, Premonitory Augury, Dark Gravidity, Peripheral Apparition, and Unsettled Atmospheres.

The ancient Franks consulted the Beech as an oracle, presumably by interpreting the sounds of its branches and leaves in the wind, much in the manner of the oracular Oak of Zeus at Dodona. In the Middle Ages, Joan of Arc confessed there was a Beech in the environs of her village known as 'The Lady's Tree' and was thought to be haunted by fairies; offerings of garlands were often placed there by local girls. In Britain, the ceremonial Yule Log was traditionally of Ash, Beech or Oak, and was decked with evergreen before being taken into the house, also receiving a libation of cider or ale. In some May Day celebrations, a young Beech is traditionally sacrificed to create the Maypole. The wood is also credited with treasure-finding abilities, as some dowsing rods were made from forked branches of Beech.

Warnings persist in folklore against sudden madness during the time of the tree's flowering. In other teachings, Beech groves are considered to harbor malevolent spirits, and one should beware being among them at dusk. Spending time amongst them at the crepuscular hour, one witnessess the peculiar perversion of light as shadows deepen upon the older trees' gnarled trunks. At such times, one is harrowed by the revelation that the lore does not lie. As the grotesques begin to emerge, one understands the power of this old taboo, if not its genesis, and proceeds with absolute respect.

Beech Leaf Noyau.

❡ A traditional English liqueur capturing the essence of the tree is made by filling a clean steeping vessel with sufficient fresh leaves, having been washed and dried. These are then covered with gin and allowed to steep for the space of a week. The liquid is then strained and reserved, and each pint is sweetened by the addition of one pound of sugar dissolved in a half pint of boiling water. Brandy may be added to taste before bottling.

BELLADONNA

Atropa belladonna

Solanaceæ (Nightshade Family)

A BUSHY, herbaceous perennial to 1.5 meters high, with purple-brown, bell-shaped flowers. On ripening the blossoms give rise to shiny, globose black berries containing copious amounts of seeds, which, like the witch's apple of fairy tales, are of a beguiling and sweet odor. Belladonna prefers chalky or alkaline soils as well as remains of old or fallen stone walls; it is also found inhabiting the ruins of ancient abbeys where it was once cultivated. In the garden, it is helped by the occasional soil amendment of crushed oyster shells or agricultural lime. Exceptionally large specimens of the plant have been documented in the Channel Islands, where certain individuals have been likened to small trees. The genus *Atropa* contains 4 accepted species: the old name 'Atropa Mandragora' has no merit taxonomically and was formerly used to refer either to Belladonna or to Mandrake (genus *Mandragora*). An uncommon Belladonna cultivar known as Yellow Nightshade (*Atropa belladonna* var. *lutea*) has pale-yellow flowers and has a venerable reputation as a love charm; it can sometimes be found at specialty nurseries.

The name *Atropa* derives from the Greek Atropos—one of the three *Moirai*, the dark sisters of Fate. Atropos was she who snipped the thread of life with awful shears, after her sisters Clotho and Læchesis spun and measured it. According to the witches' flying ointment researcher Harold Hansen, Belladonna's medieval name *Dwale* derives from the Old Norse *dvale*, meaning 'trance'. Others believe Dwale originates from the French word *deuil*, meaning grief.

LITANY OF NAMES

Deadly Nightshade
Banewort
Belaiki
Beladar
Bastard Tobacco
Circæon
Moonshade
Dwale
Laethale
Mortiferum
Naughty Man's Cherries
Sorcerer's Cherry
Tollkirsche

The plant's action on the human corpus is profound. Belladonna specifically affects the central nervous system when taken internally; its pharmacological effects are anodyne, visionary, and stupefacient. In more poetically inclined classifications, it is considered a profound deliriant, and sometimes an aphrodisiac. In early modern pharmacy, *Belladonnæ Radix* was the official name for the root. The lethal power of the Beautiful Lady was sought in past eras to procure abortion, but like many abortifacients, the line between active and fatal dose was somewhat blurry and ever shifting. Belladonna is also thought to be the plant which poisoned Marcus Antonius' troops during the Parthian wars.

> What has become of Maldoror's
> first song, since his mouth,
> full of belladonna leaves, uttered it through
> realms of anger, in a moment of reflection?
>
> COMTE DE LAUTRÉAMONT
> *Chants de Maldoror*, 1868

Belladonna poisoning is characterized by initial stimulation, followed by confusion and the appearance of visions and phantasms. If the dose is large enough, there follows central narcotic paralysis, coma, and death. In therapeutic doses, the herb's powers affect the peripheral nervous system. Belladonna contains the tropane alkaloids atropine, hyoscine, hyoscyamine, traces of nicotine, and belladonine. The leaves of contain 0.3–0.5% total alkaloids; the roots slightly more with 0.4–0.7%.

Among the most potent strains of the plant, there are well-circulated reports that one of the sweet berries can kill a child, and that adults may perish after eating in excess of three. However, other reports conflict with this, suggesting higher lethal doses, suggesting considerable variation in toxicity from plant to plant.

In planetary correspondence and celestial magic, it is aligned with Saturn and, in astrological systems inclusive of trans-Saturnian planets, Neptune. Importantly, where its use in witchcraft and sorcery is concerned, Belladonna partakes of a felicitous tessellation of Venusian, Saturnian and Lunar principles, a threefold alliance I have referred to in previous writings as 'the hexing trine'. This is owed to its strongly feminine nature, its temporal suspension and lethality, and its dreamy, trance-inducing properties. Where planetary magic is concerned, all three obtain, with especial relevance to Venus Aversa, the shadowed form of the Lady.

The Spirit-Retinue of Belladonna

Catatonia, Transfixture, Somnambulism, Sublimation, Wailing, Infernal Descent, Paramnesia, Queenly Proclamation, Baleful Injunction, Looming Threat, Arresting Beauty, Flocculating Shadow, and Monstrous Revelation.

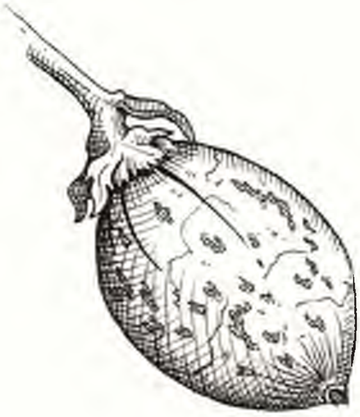
In occult and magical usage, Belladonna has traditionally been used in formulæ of Exorcism, Necromancy, Coercion, and Allure. The priest-physicians of ancient Sumer used the herb for driving out disease-causing noxious spirits. It also has a long history of use as a love charm.

As with Mandrake, certain supernatural dangers were said to attend the harvesting of the plant, due to the intrusive presence of the Devil. A tradition of gathering Belladonna on Walpurgisnacht recommended the release of a Black Hen, from which the Devil was known to run. According to Mircea Eliade, the plant was addressed reverently by various names before harvesting, such as *Doamna Buna*, Great Mistress, and Empress of Herbs.

The dried leaves, roots, and berries may be judiciously added to incenses for triumph, burned to overcome an enemy in warfare, or added to charm-bags for this same purpose. The juices of the plant may be used to consecrate branches of wood for use as wands or divining rods. The plant is also naturally allied to rites of death and the underworld.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Coercion, Exorcism, Allure, Death.
Planets: Saturn, Venus, the Moon.
Element: Water.
Deific Forms: Atropos.
Virtue: Surrender.
Ritual Action: Trance.
Medicine: Analgesia.
Poison: Anticholinergic.
Therapeutic: Mercy.
Affliction: Despondency.
Eponymous Compound: belladonine—$C_{34}H_{42}N_2O_4$.
Emblem: A pallid lady clad in mauve raiment, crowned with green leaves, standing amidst ruins and exalting a human skull.



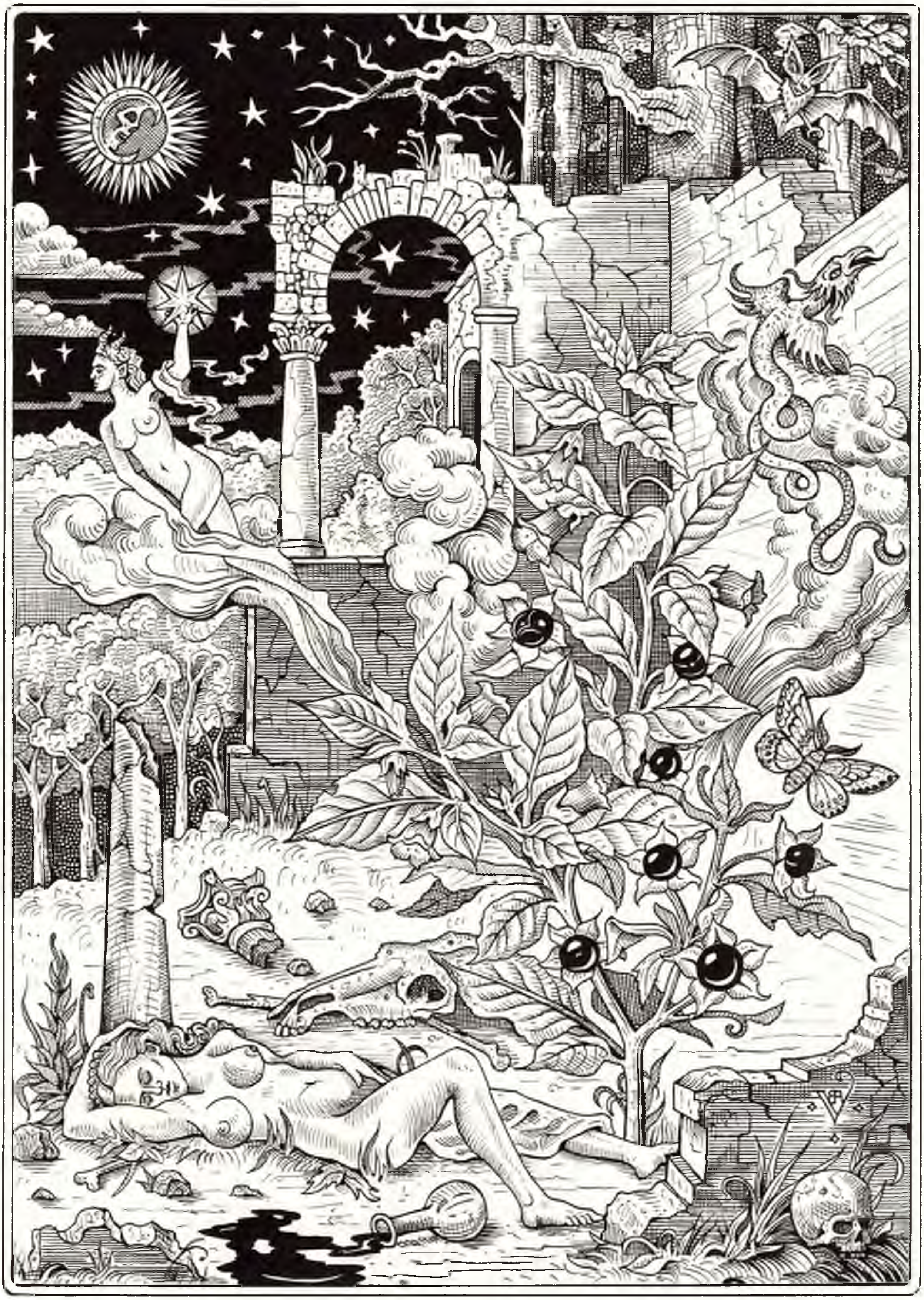
BETEL

Areca catechu
Palmaceæ (Palm Family)

A TALL, handsome, and slender palm native to Asia, reaching an upwards height of 30 meters, widely cultivated in the tropics of the eastern hemisphere. Thriving best in partial shade and heavy rainfall, Betel is also known as Areca Nut, Pinang, Catechu, and Guvka.

The tree, and particularly its seed, is governed by the planetary dispensations of Mercury and Saturn. Its powers, as used in occult operations are oblation, protection and bewitchment. It is also used to enhance mental powers, give protection from disease, and to turn fortune to one's favor. For intoxication, and the work of sorcery, it is the seeds which are used. which are sometimes fashioned into beads. Various other parts of the plant have been used medicinally, and in industry.

Betel has been employed in a Malay charm against fevers, in combination with banana,



BELLADONNA: DREAM AND DOMINION

tobacco, egg and rice, left at a triple crossroads. In some magical traditions, the ground nut is burnt on charcoal to ward off demons.

> *I bring you a betel leaf to chew,*
> *Dab the lime onto it, Prince Ferocious,*
> *For [Her], Prince Distraction's Daughter, to chew.*
> —From a Malay Chant to Steal a Person's Soul

An old saying in India, describing a woman who has bewitched a man, says "She has fed him Betel nuts." Among the Tamils, the leaf of the Betel was used to administer a few drops of milk upon the foreheads of a couple during the wedding rite in order to protect them from the evil eye.

Betel is a CNS stimulant, and possesses anti-tumor properties, including those of emmenagogue, vermifuge, astringent, and stomachic. In folk medicine, clysters of the nut decoction are given for tapeworm; essential oils extracted from the leaves of the tree have been effective in treating throat complaints, bronchitis, and diptheria. Betel is a traditional Ayurvedic aphrodisiac. The nut contains the compounds arecoline ($C_8H_{13}NO_2$), as well as arecaidine, chavicol, allylpyrocathecol, chavibetol, cadinene, choline, catechin, guvacine, guvacoline, isoguvacine; along with significant amounts of fatty acids and tannins.

As an entheogenic and phytognostic agent, the Betel is perhaps the most widely used plant in the world; used by about one-tenth of the global population. As a masticatory, the nut is chewed in a wrapping of betel pepper leaves (*Piper betel*) dusted with burnt lime, catechu gum from the Malayan acacia tree, together with cardamom and sundry spices. The states invoked by the plant are especially conducive to the workings of the mind, though the ally should be treated with caution, as it can become addictive, and prolonged, regular use rots the teeth. The stimulation produced is both bodily and mental.

Arecoline, is also a suspected carcinogen. Ingestion of unripe nuts can give rise to cause nausea, vertigo, loose stools, and convulsions. Chewing of the sacramental quid in the traditional manner releases carcinogenic substances from P. *betel*. Though there is some difference of toxicological opinion on how much of the nut is toxic, 2 mg of the solanaceous alkaloid atropine, subcutaneously injected, is considered an antidote, followed by gastric lavage.

The Spirit-Retune of Betel

Invigoration, Salience, Augmentation, Animus,
Bewitchment, Constriction, Recidivism,
Privation, Slabbering, Defiled Flesh,
Sharpened Recollection, Demonic
Habituation, & Osseous
Destruction.

BENZOIN

Styrax benzoin; S. tonkininse

Styraceæ (Styrax Family)

BENZOIN is an aromatic wound-derived resin, available in lump form or tears, or its prepared essential oil. When burned, its aroma is sweet and balsamic, yet mild. Dispersed throughout the corpus of a blended incense, Benzoin serves as an aromatic fixative, and a harmonizer of constituent scents. The source of the resin is a semi-deciduous tree native to Southeast Asia and Indonesia, growing from 10 to 30 meters in height. Its leaves are ovate, with white, bisexual flowers. The gray bark is smooth but becomes furrowed with age. The genus *Styrax* contains about 100 accepted species.

The best quality resin bears an odor reminiscent of vanilla; other varieties may yield a more pronounced acridity. As a product of commerce, it is of varied colors depending on source and tree age, including white, garyish white, brown, grayish brown, or pinkish brown. Good quality essential oil of Benzoin bears a sweet, mild, yet and evocative fragrance and is well worth the price and seeking. The tincture, sometimes compounded with other precious gums and resins, bears the name Friar's Balsam, and is a classic topical formula for wounds.

Its medicinal powers in the human body are anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, carminative, diuretic, stypic, and vulenary. Folk medicine has used preparations of Benzoin for afflictions of the skin and gum inflammations, as well as to treat sore throats and asthma. Vaginal suffumigations of Benzoin, as well as other medicinal preparations, were used for strengthening the womb either in cases or hardening or prolapse.

The magnificence of the resin's aroma is owed to its legion aromatic compounds, including benzoic acid, cinnamyl benzoate, styrene, vanillin, benzaldehyde, and coniferyl benzoate. This grouping of fragrant substances accords well with the classification of a balsam, or of a balsamic character. Some Benzoin resins, when burned, evoke peripheral aromatic notes of combusting plastic, a phenomenon resonant with the herb's natural component styrene, a precursor to the industrial product styrofoam.

Benzoin is primarily associated with the planetary dispensations of the Sun, Venus and Jupiter; its governing elemental force is Air. In magical operations, its associations are many, and include Love, Purification, Peace, Harmony, Protection from Noxious Spirits, Curse Lifting, Longevity and Triumph. It is also used as an aphrodisiac, both medicinally and magically. The ritual furnaces of the ancient Assyrian alchemists were fired with Styrax wood, and the resin is a ubiquitous ingredient in incenses of the Islamic and European grimoire traditions, often aligned with angelic intelligences.

In Indonesia, Benzoin is used for exorcising evil spirits. A Muslim tradition of India prescribes burning an incense compounded of Benzoin and seeds of Neem (*Azadirachta indica*) at weddings to keep evil spirits away. A modern Egyptian folk charm to dispell spirits of envy makes use of thurified Benzoin gum.

As well as being used as a suffumigation for evacuating a space of foul spirits, Benzoin incences may also be used for deliberate conjuration of *jinn* spirits. Sorcerers of Mali have used the burning vapors of Benzoin for transformation into tigers.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF BENZOIN

Exaltation, Grace, Refinement, Warmth, Collaboration, Concord, Felicity, Panacea, Restorative Faculty, Wholesome Beauty, Sylvan Bulwarks, Spiritual Amplification, and Daimonic Commerce.

BETH ROOT

Trillium erectum

Melanthiaceæ (Bunchflower Family)

THE Trillium, or Wake-Robin, as plants of the genus are sometimes collectively known, is a shade-dwelling perennial with three large leaves and a smooth, erect stem, 30-40 cm in height. The three-petaled red or purple flower produces a subtle but feculent odor redolent of carrion, hence its folk name 'Stinking Benjamin'. Its swollen rhizome, testicular in shape, is characteristic of many orchids, especially those prized for magical use. Beth Root prefers the rich soil of moist, shady woodlands, and flowers in May and June. The parts used are the dried root, and, less frequently, the leaves.

Its action upon the body is antisialagogue, antiseptic, anticatarrh, stypic, circulatory tonic, and astringent. In traditional medicine, it has been used as a uterine tonic and to break up venous congestion. As one might expect from an astringent herb, it has been much employed to combat hemmorhages. Beth Root is also used externally, usually in the form of a poultice, as a local irritant in skin conditions.

A venerated root in African American magic, the dried rhizome has been sold since the 20th century under the names Low John, Southern John, and Chewing John Root. Its occult powers concern the attraction of love and money, and in some cases turning away curses, or removal of 'the whammy'. Its primary planetary correspondences are Venus and Saturn.

Beth Root, as well as other species of Wake-Robin, have enjoyed a reputation in sorcery for magical powders of Love and Allure. Among some Native American tribes, powdered Beth Root was used by women as an attractor of men, the former adding it to food to ensnare a lover or mate. About one quarter of a small root was employed for this purpose. This power is the natural extension of its esteemed place within the family of Orchids, where the erotomorphological qualities of both vulva and phallus are pervasive. As would be expected from an herb with strong Venusian character, it is promiscuous, freely hybridizing with other *Trillium* species in the wild. The plant can thrive in the garden, and there are several cultivars sold by nurseries.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF BETH ROOT

Immodesty, Inducement, Tumescence, Turgidity, Fecundity, Enrichment, Revival, Blushing Pinkness, Overflowing Plenitude, Arousing Scents, Erogenous Yearnings, Lecherous Agglutinations, and Lubricious Couplings.

BETONY

Stachys officinalis

Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

WOOD Betony is a perennial herb populating woodlands and gardens, having magenta flowers and wrinkled, oval, scalloped hairy leaves. It is native to Europe, as well as Wales and England. The genus *Stachys* includes approximately 380 species and is nearly cosmopolitan, with centers of diversity concentrated in Europe, Asia, Africa, and North America. Collectively, they are known as the Woundworts or Hedge Nettles.

Plant-medicine makes use of its virtues as a nervine, anodyne, diuretic, and circulatory tonic. Some herblists prescribed the tea for clearing eruptions of the skin; the leaves may also be used as a poultice. Root of Betony has been employed as a liver tonic but also exhibits some action as an emetic. As a wound-wash for adder bite, the famous Welsh Myddfai physicians recommended a liniment made of Betony and Rosemary pounded in water. At one time it was a favored panacea, a power reflected in its common name Bishopswort. It was much planted in monastery and physic gardens.

> *Take a handful of betony and pound well, expressing in water and straining carefully; drink some of this before you have taken any food or drink, and you will not get drunk that day.*
>
> THE PHYSICIANS OF MYDDFAI

Among the planets, Betony was considered most favored by Jupiter. Its magical powers encompassed protection from maleficia, curse-lifting, protection from noxious spirits and dispersion of the Evil Eye. The herb was also a charm of Attraction and Beneficence and was used as a traveller's charm to assuage weariness. The plant protected the living from the haunting dead, and in England it was a frequent denizen of graveyards.

In ancient Saxon traditions, Betony was considered one of the best magical amulets, along with Vervain, against demons, monsters, frightful visions, goblins, elves, and horrifying dreams. One popular charm employed the leaf, chewed before sleep, for this purpose.

In medieval times, Betony, in combination with Poison Hemlock and Fennel seed, was considered a peerless antitdote to the bite of a mad dog. Srong infusions of the aerial portions are effective for ritual house-clearings.

BINDWEED

Convolvulus arvensis

Convolvulaceæ (Bindweed Family)

THE hardy Common Bindweed is an annual vine with white, trumpet-shaped flowers that open in early morning and close early afternoon; its leaves are heart or spade-shaped, in color green to glaucous. The plant has aggressive, rampant growth and readily competes for space and nutrients with other plants, often choking them out, or 'binding' them by use of powerful tendrils. Bindweed is highly adaptive to numerous growing conditions by way of its firmly-anchored root, creeping vines, drought tolerance and exceptional seed viability. Like other convolvulaceous species, Bindweed has a medicinal reputation as a drastic cathartic; its use as a strong decoction has been documented in Yorkshire as a Romany cure for worms. The species known by the common name of Rhodium Wood (*Convulvulus scoparius*) produces an aromatic rose-scented oil. Aside from *Convulvulus arvensis*, the word 'Bindweed' has been used in vulgar parlance to refer to all creeping, tendril-wielding plants of the botanical family Convolvulaceæ.

Strongly associated with poison, and by its nature being a feller and destroyer of native plants, its planetary governance is generally Saturnian, an alignment affirmed by its harsh effects on the human body. In magic, it naturally commands the powers of Binding and Coercion, whether in spells beneficent (love) or baneful (war). The tendrils command magical usage in amorous charms in a similar fashion to other clinging plants such as Dodder and Bedstraw, and the same virtues are amplified in the juice, pounded from whole, fresh plants. Country lore refers to the plant as Devil's Guts, and instructs that Bindweeds are spun by the Devil each night to destroy the crops; this aligns well with the species' position as agricultural Opposer, and explains the considerable number of herbicides and other weed-control strategies that various goverments have tried to implement against it. As a magical constrictor, its vines, alive or dead, may be used as natural twine to bind curse effigies.

The Spirit-Retinue of Bindweed

Infiltration, Innoculation, Smothering, Suppression,
Penetration, Resourcefulness, Acquisition, Greed,
Zeal, Industry, Creeping Intoxication,
Impervious Spawn, and
Firm Restraint.

BIRCH

Betula spp.
Betulaceæ (Birch Family)

BETULA PENDULA, the European Birch, is a graceful, deciduous tree to 20 meters in height, possessing flaky white or gray bark, with drooping branches and a preference for wet soil. Its leaves are ovate, with serrate margins, and the tree is monoecious, bearing male and female catkins on the same tree. It is also known as Silver Birch, especially in Britain, where it is invasive in a number of forest environments.

The Birch genus *Betula* has 117 accepted species with several more currently under assessment. In North America, native stands of Birches were nearly obliterated in the 19th century for commercial production of Oil of Wintergreen. *Betula nigra*, the Black Birch, is a heat-tolerant species native to the eastern United States, its range extending into the deep South. Paper Birch is *Betula papyrifera*, its thin bark, from which its name is derived, can be used as a sweet-smelling fumigant. When using essential oil, that of White Birch, *Betula alba*, is recommended over the Sweet Birch, *Betula lenta*, as the latter consists almost entirely of methyl salicylate, a compound with documented toxicity.

Its power in the body is astringent, vermifuge, analgesic, anti-inflammatory, diuretic, diaphoretic, febrifuge, and tonic. Birch tea may also be made from healthy spring leaves, using 25 grams of dried plant material steeped a short while in a pint of boiling water, useful in combatting excess humors and other dropsical conditions. Birch tea and sap may be used as a scalp wash to combat dandruff and hair loss, or as a rinse for the treatment of lesions of the mouth, gums, and throat. Decoctions of Birch were used as a cure for impotence in traditional Welsh remedies. An infusion of the leaves has traditionally been used to remedy maladies of the skin, and in Germany rising Birch sap was drunk in the spring to strengthen the bloodBirch sap is also tapped for boiling into syrup, a tradition alive and well in many North American states such as Alaska. It is obtained from three subspecies of Paper Birch: *Betula papyrifera* var. *neoalaskana*, as well as var. *commutata* and var. *kenaica*. Though sweet, its flavor is delicate and distinctly mineral, recalling the glacial alluvium in which these trees flourish. Sugar concentration in Birch is weaker than in Sugar Maple, so a greater amount of sap must be collected to achieve the same volume of syrup. In England, in a year of abundant sapping, traditional Birch wines are made, as is Birch Beer.

> The bark is burnt to correct bad air, and for this purpose it is next in goodness to Juniper.
> G. MOTHERBY
> *A New Medical Dictionary, or General Repository of Physick*, 1785

Among the planets, the tree is an arboreal emissary of Venus, partaking in her aspects of love, beauty, and aesthetic refinement. The tree's occult powers are Love, Allure, Coercion, and Summoning. Given the tree's usage in love charms, but also in cursing and vindictive magic, it also participates in the well-known Venusian emotional arena of jealousy.

In North America, the Ojibwe used it for protection from ghosts; the bark was hung outside the home to put the spirits of the recently dead to flight. The intersection of these powers, together with its association with women and goddesses, aligns the Birch with the figure of the sorceress and witchcraft.

Among Siberians, some maintain that the Birch tree gave a bequest of power to the first shaman, who stood beneath the tree to catch the juices in his mouth. There is a rustic custom from Russia of dressing a felled Birch tree in women's clothes prior to Whitsuntide, then parading her about for several days before hurling her into a stream. In Scandinavia, the Birch is associated with May Day, and in some traditions the maypole was a living Birch tree.

W. F. Ryan's seminal study of Russian magic *The Bathhouse at Midnight* documents a traditional method of conjuring wood-spirits. A circle of Birch saplings is first made upon the ground. The sorcerer then enters the circle and stands in its midst; a cross, if worn on the person, is removed. Then the sorcerer shouts *Grandfather!*

This was a euphemism for Khoziain, or Master of the Forest, whose true name was taboo.

The branches possess magic accessed by a diversity of spells, charms and folk practices, and it is their power which emerges as the single most unifying aspect of magical lore. As a scourge, its branches are linked to many traditions testifying to its power. One of the accursed trees of Christianity, the Birch was maligned by God because its branches had been used to scourge Christ at his crucifixion. Fresh Birch switches are traditionally employed as cleansing flagella in northern Russian bathhouses and in sundry purification magics, including cleansing of the bride-to-be before the wedding. The bark may also be employed in spells of wrath, revenge and punishing.

Twigs from a trembling Birch were taken to court as magical fetishes, to provoke fear and trembling in one's opponent. An old European magic involved the light ritual scourging of cattle with consecrated Birch rods to ensure their fertility. In this manner switches were also used for beating the bounds as well as flogging the insane to drive out demons. In Ozark magic, three Birch branches were burned for a divinatory fire, thus to determine who had bewitched a cow. Traditions of Slavic sorcery also utilize Birch wood as a potent weapon against *maleficia*; in some folkore, a witch struck with a Birch broom is deprived of all maledictive power. However, in some European traditions, the witch's broomstick was crafted of Birch-wood.

The Spirit-Retinue of Birch

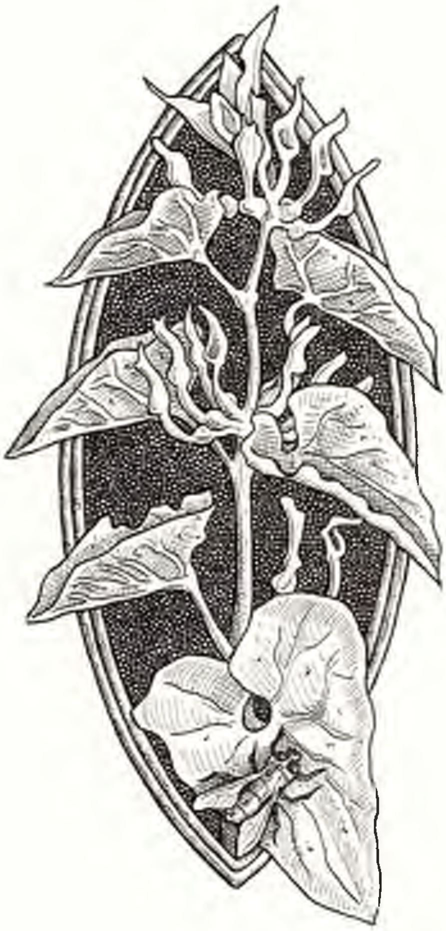
Pulchritude, Gracility, Persuasion, Captivation, Indignation, Haughtiness, Dispersion, Abreaction, Encroachment, Demarcation, Sudden Coalescence, Entranced Reverie, and Ethereal Grandeur.

For many years, I knew and worked with a practitioner of Russian descent who carried a Birch staff which had been in his family for four generations. The rod was worn smooth and darkened with the patina of age, and according to longstanding tradition, used for the express purpose of sending or stopping storms.

In North American folklore, an old witch-initiation began by dancing with the Devil around a Birch tree. A ring was drawn around a stooping birch, marking an × in the ring, and dancing for 13 consecutive nights. Then offerings of blood (from a hen, and the supplicant herself) are given the tree. The Devil then appears and bestows a witch-mark upon the body of the initiate for suckling an imp.

This tree is of especial totemic interest to women, as many traditions regard the Birch-spirit as a Lady. In Native American magic, love-fetishes made of Birch bark were used among the Cree and Blackfoot.

Excessive peeling of a Birch tree can lead to its decline and death; endeavor to locate a diverse stand of the trees for gathering and wildcrafting purposes. Collect leaves in spring and autumn; dry at room temperature.



BIRTHWORT

Aristolochia spp.

Aristolochiaceæ (Dutchman's Pipe Family)

A PERENNIAL herb to 30 centimeters high, haunting the sodden ground of waterside thickets, and inhabiting the perimeters of groves and vineyards. Heart-shaped leaves and bloated flowers resembling tobacco pipes are characteristic. The genus *Aristolochia* boasts some 500 species, most of which are tropical.

Throughout Europe, demon-banishing properties were ascribed the smoke of the dried root. A traditional incense to drive away incubi was compounded of the roots of Birthwort, along with Calamus, Cubeb, Cardamon, Ginger, Pepper, Gillyflowers, Mace, Cinnamon, Nutmeg, Sandalwood, Lignum Aloes, and Cloves.

The herb is also used for travelling talismans, effecting a safe journey, or to speed a message on its way to a recipient without interference. In the *Anglo-Saxon Herbal*, smoke of the plant was used to fumigate a person who was 'fastidious in eating,' the same was used against *deofl seocniss* (devil-sickness). Conception charms in antiquity frequently used the plant—often mixed in food—for the conception of male children.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF BIRTHWORT

Excision, Sanitization, Evacuation, Movement, Peregrination, Contravenom, Mutation, Distension, Carnal Contrivances, Drawn Suppurations, Swift Exodus, Heroic Medicine, and Forceful Intervention.

In pharmacy, Birthwort is often classified as an aromatic bitter, stomachic, anti-cancer, and theriac; Paracelsus knew well of its use in dissolving ulcers. A decoction of Virginia Snakeroot (*Aristolochia serpentaria*) was blown over feverish patients by Cherokee healers; the same brew was drunk for coughs. In the Afro-Brazilian traditions of Candomblé, *Aristolochia trilobata*, known by the sorcerous name of Joco Mojé, is taken for rheumatism and hernias.

Aristolochic acids, chemical brethren to isoquinoline alkaloids, are present in the plant; research by the University of Wisconsin confirms the efficacy of the ancient use of Birthworts for treating cancers. Though the plant and its extracts have been shown to be beneficial in limited amounts against certain cancers, symptoms of poisoning from some species such as *A. clematitis* may occur, and include vomiting, diarrhea, and miscarriage; gastrointestinal and kidney damage can be from moderate to severe. Death from Birthwort poisoning is usually by respiratory failure.

The presence of toxic compounds in various Birthworts aligns with their use *against* poisons in traditional magic and medicine. *Aristolochia rotunda* was used in several medieval counter-poison and theriac formulae. The mashed root was used as a poultice on snakebites and secreted into the hollows of rotten teeth to assuage localized agonies. In the Sudan, the Birthwort known as *Jilijil* (*A. bracteolata*) is a venerated curative against scorpion stings, a poultice of the mashed root is applied to the tormented area. Known as Scorpion Root, it is also used as a topical anodyne for other afflictions such as abscessed teeth. In Nigeria, flowers of *A. bracteolata* are worn as a charm as against the attacks of venomous animals. In India, dried pieces of *A. indica* are worn as amulets to protect against madness.

BITTERBRUSH

Purshia tridentata

Rosaceæ (Rose Family)

ALSO known as Antelope Brush or Hunabe, the Bitterbrush is a hardy shrub 1-3 meters in height with small gray to glaucous leaves and pale-yellow flowers, inhabiting montane areas of the Americamn west, from British Columbia to California. It is especially adapted to the Sagebrush Scrub plant community, as well as Juniper woodland and subalpine forest. The herb was burned by Native Americans to expunge repugnant spirits, and those infected with the smallpox. A fumigation of Bitterbrush cleansed the domicile, and all clothing and personal objects were passed through the smokes to purify them. The genus *Purshia* contains two species, both native to North America.

BITTER LETTUCE

Lactuca virosa

Asteraceæ (Sunflower Family)

A MILKY-JUICED annual or biennial herb thriving in both garden and roadside, Bitter Lettuce is a native of Southern Europe, North Africa, and Turkey but is naturalized in many places in the northern hemisphere. Preferring full sun exposure, it grows to 1.5 meters, has a thick brown taproot, and yellow disk-shaped flowers.

Visually, it presents the classic appearance of the 'common asteraceous weed'.

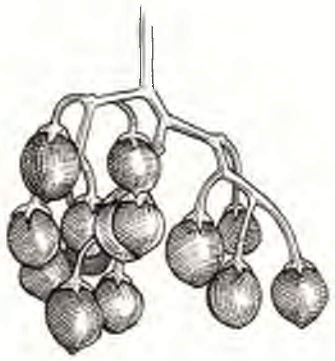
Its seeds and latex are sedative, analgesic, anæsthetic, antispasmodic, and in concentrated forms, hypnotic. Lactucarium, also known as lettuce opium, is a formerly official drug produced from the latex, collected by severing the stem prior to bolting and allowing the milky fluid to air-dry into a friable brown mass. Though older pharmacopeias favorably compare it with opium (which it once adulterated), it is of a milder narcotic character, and a greater quantity is needed to approximate the effects of *morphia*. In the Middle Ages, physicians used lactucarium also to lessen the severity of pulmonary afflictions. Modern phytochemical investigations of lactucarium have revealed the novel constituents α-lactucerol, β-lactucerol, lactucin and lactucopicrin, and its analgesic effects have been favorably compared with ibuprofen. Lettuce opium is also smoked as a psychoactive, often in combination with other botanicals incepting mild euphoria, such as Damiana (*Turnera diffusa*).

In planetary correspondence, the astrological powers of the Moon govern the plant, owing to the white and hypnotic qualities of its sap. Lettuces were, especially in medieval times, considered to possess great powers of arousing erotic desire. They were frequent ingredients in European love potions and charms; seeds of Lettuce were eaten by women to promote fertility. A Romany spell for winning love was conjured by planting the seeds in the name of the beloved: as the plants thrived, so did the love desired.

In North America, the Navajo used a decoction of Prickly Lettuce (*L. serriola*) as a ceremonial emetic, and the native species Blue Wood Lettuce (*L. biennis*) was used as a hunting charm to attract deer.

The genus *Lactuca*, comprising the True Lettuces, contains over 100 individual species, nearly all of them wild. The edible Lettuce, *Lactuca sativa*, is not the most potent exemplar (due to its breeding for esculence), but it does share magical and medicinal properties with *L. virosa*, as do other Lettuce species, a partial list of which follows:

Wild Lettuce	*Lactuca quercina*
Canadian Lettuce	*Lactuca canadensis*
Biannual Lettuce	*Lactuca ludoviciana*
Hairy Lettuce	*Lactuca hirsute*
Indian Lettuce	*Lactuca indica*
Wall Lettuce	*Lactuca muralis*
Prickly Lettuce	*Lactuca serriola*



BITTERSWEET

Solanum dulcamara

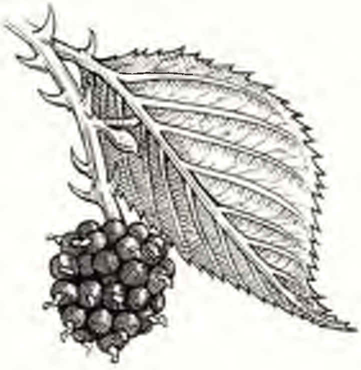
Solanaceæ (Nightshade Family)

THE herb Bittersweet is a shrubby climber to 2 meters in height, with simple, compound hastate leaves. Its arresting five-petaled flowers are bright pinkish purple, with yellow anthers; they are followed by ovate green berries, which, upon ripen to blood-red. To the tongue, the twigs first taste bitter, then sweet, hence its name. It is sometimes mistaken for Belladonna but, though the two plants bear a phylogenetic kinship, Bittersweet berries are red rather than black like Deadly Nightshade, and the flowers do not resemble one another at all. Its British common name Tether-Devil testifies to its habit of climbing, sometimes using other plants as a trellis; it frequents hedges and waysides.

As a folk medicament, it is restorative and anti-rheumatic. Twigs—collected in Autumn after the leaves have fallen—have been employed as a diuretic and diaphoretic. In folk medicaments, the herb has been used as an anti-rheumatic and for dissolving blood clots. The plant's common name Felonwort refers to its powers to cure felons or whitlow, an inflammation of the cuticle of the finger or toe. The berries possess a stupefacient effect and are toxic to humans and mammals, although they are savored by birds.

In harmony with many plants of the Nightshade family, and in particular the genus *Solanum*, the plant contains a unique configuration of toxic alkaloids. Soladulcidine, solasodine, and tomatidine are the poisonous principles present in the greatest quantities, but the more notorious of the tropanes, such as scopolomine, hyoscyamine, and hyoscine, are also represented. Poisoning from Bittersweet is generally not fatal.

In planetary correspondence, its powers are aligned with Saturn and Mercury. Its best-known magical use was by herders, who hung it around the necks of animals to dispel the Evil Eye. In Somerset, wreaths of Bittersweet were documented as amulets against witchcraft, particularly in the Mendip district. As an extension of this principle, the juices of the plant may be used to empower amulets of protection.



BLACKBERRY

Rubus fruticosus, *Rubus* spp.
Rosaceæ (Rose Family)

IRASCIBLE in demeanor, unyielding in its possession of ground, the Blackberry is a thorny, spreading perennial vine, growing in open washes, meadows, swales and roadsides. Its flowers are pink or white and evoke the fivefold symmetry of its fellows in the Rose Family. The attractive, aggregate fruit for which it is known ripens from pale green, to red, to a deep purple-black and is suitable as a food, wine, cordial or medicine. Some Blackberry species, given proper habitat and natural trellising, may reach in excess of 3 meters in height and form significant forest-like thickets.

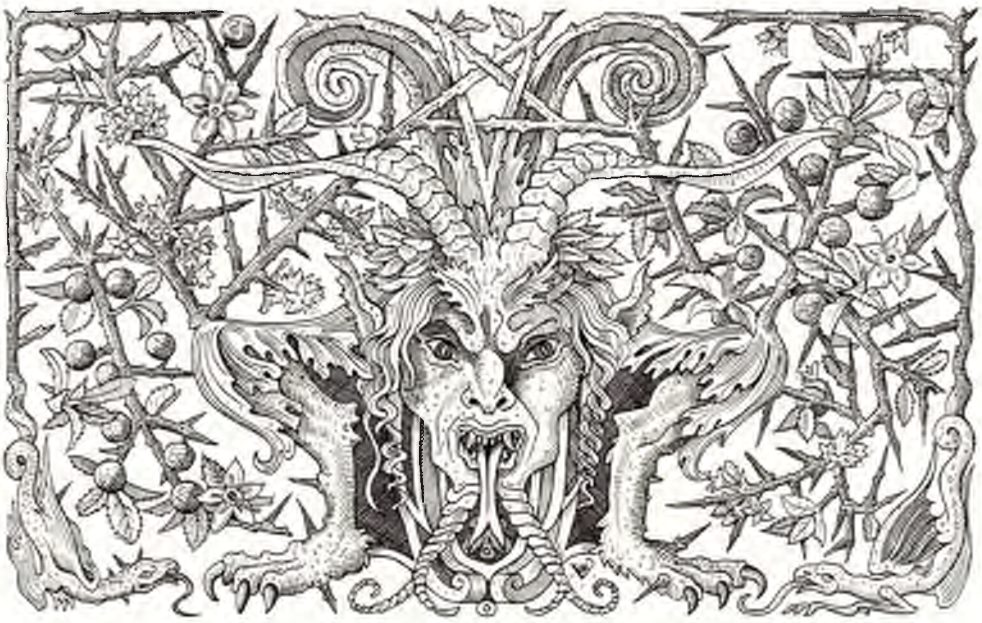
Rubus, the genus which encompasses Blackberries, Raspberries, Thimbleberries and kindred brambles, is vast and contains more than 330 named species. Though the binomial *Rubus fruticosus* is often used as an assembly-point for Blackberry, the plant as commonly named is spread across several species, and there is rampant hybridization among species. Important members of this grouping are Elmleaf Blackberry (*R. ulmifolius*), and Holy Bramble (*R. sanctus*), though there are may others, and numerous cultivars exist. Where I live, the ethnobotanically significant Pacific Blackberry (*R. ursinus*) is a common feature of the wild, urban, and suburban landscape, and can be found in thickets growing with other thorny, irritating plants such as Poison Oak (*Toxicodendron diversilobum*) and Stinging Nettle (*Urtica* spp.), conspirators in human harassment.

Beyond the nutritive qualities of its berry, the plant's most remarkable power as a medicine is as an astringent. This arises from the presence of tannins concentrated in the root and leaves, which in addition to Blackberry's material constitution are a key component of its spiritual identity. Decoctions, unguents, or tinctures of the leaves have been traditionally used to treat dandruff and other flaking ailments of the skin; and the leaf or root decocation is a tested remedy for arresting diarrhea. Blackberry was also used by the ancients as a mouthwash to strengthen gums, as a gargle to arrest sore throat and as a hair dye.

The planetary attributes of *Rubus fruticosa* are balanced between Venus and Mars, each radiating according to the nature of entreaty and ritual use. As with many of the most ancient goddesses of polytheism, the plant is an empowered emissary of love and war, these attributes united by the virtue of passion. The flower and fruit may be considered reservoirs of pleasing nourishment and attraction, and thus embody the herb's Venusian bearing; the thorns and root respectively possess more offensive and entrenched natures, transmitting Martial comportment. Thus, whether in defense of the heart, or beckoning its beloved, the plant manifests an engaged and committed stance of Desire.

As revealed by magical practices which use it, Blackberry also resonates the occult powers of Binding, Death, and Malevolence, as well Protection from Maleficia. It also possesses the magical attributes of Love, Allure, and Coercion. Naturally occurring arches of Blackberry, rooted at each end, were believed to possess marvellous healing virtues, beneath which an afflicted person could pass and be healed. Such arches also were said to confer impeccable success in gambling to those fortunate enough to pass through them.

Islamic magic employed the leaves in love-philters. The root, hard-earned by much digging and frustration, may assume naturally grotesque shapes, appearing human, animal, or demonic. As such in their dried form they serve well as the



BLACKTHORN DAIMON

basis for carved fetishes or idols, in similar fashion to the woody roots of several plants used as 'briar'.

In European magical strata, Blackberry has long been favored for protection against or all manner of undead or 'earthbound' spirits. Brambles were planted over graves to prevent the deceased from returning to haunt the material plane, and in some areas of the British Isles, it was believed that malign spirits could be kept at bay by wearing a wreath of the Blackberry, Rowan, and Ivy. A strong infusion of Blackberry leaves, used as a floor wash, may be used as a house-cleansing charm against infectious or troublesome spirits. 'Sprite flails', constructed from nine well-thorned blackberry brambles and bound with Willow, are employed in the magical traditions of East Anglia to drive away repugnant spirits.

Despite its propensity for binding evil, some have regarded the plant itself as infected by the malevolent faerie host. A medieval European spell to encourage hatred between two persons demands the sacrifice of a she-goat among Blackberry brambles.

In Ireland, the ruinous spirit known as the Pooka defiled the fruits, giving rise to a rotting mold around the holy day of Samhain, and so the season's harvesting ceased thereafter. This berry-spoilage was also blamed on witches or ill-doing sorcerers. The dark red-purple juice of the fruit is an effective ornamental stain for the flesh, whether for ritual or cosmetic ornamentation.

The Spirit-Retinue of Blackberry

Binding, Fixity, Conservation, Obduracy, Withholding, Windfall, Sustenance, Rustic Majesty, Diabolic Eminence, Nectarous Treasure, Winsome Darkness, Arresting Puncture, and Hardened Bulwark.

BLACKTHORN

Prunus spinosa

Rosaceæ (Rose Family)

DIVIDING one field from the next is the spine-woven thicket of Blackthorn, a prickled, shrubby, deciduous tree, found in Europe, Asia and the British Isles. It grows from 1–4 meters in height, and freely gives rise to thickets. Its small white rosaceous flowers appear in the spring; its bark is maroon, and its wood dense and hard. Its beguiling purple fruit, also known as sloes or bullums, are best known as the flavoring source of Sloe Gin.

The flowers and fruits of the tree are used in traditional English medicine, and mirror in some capacity its esoteric aspects. Blackthorn's power of binding the guts, and excessive menses, is echoed in its knack, well attested in folklore, for subjugating demons. A strong decoction of the bark is a traditional English cure for swollen feet; the Romany of Sussex cured toothache by preparing strong decoctions of the young shoots.

In the folk medicine of Southern Italy, a decoction of the sloes is used as a liver tonic.

Residing in the planetary arena of Saturn, its magical use is strongly apotropaic, but it possesses the power to send ill magic, as well as drive it away. Since ancient times it has been valued as a talisman against fascination, and as a house-ward; Blackthorn is sometimes planted outside homes for protection. Sprays of the flowers have in some parts been taboo in the home, bringing evil luck and infection. In some magical traditions, it can bind the Devil, either to keep him constrained, or to command him according to the sorcerer's will.

Staves of Blackthorn are traditionally used for expelling spirits of all kinds: in some forms of British sorcery, a *sway* or wand made from Blackthorn possessed, among other potencies, the power to purge noxious influence and entity. In *The White Goddess*, Robert Graves reports that villagers in South Devon feared 'the black rod'—a staff of blackthorn carried by local witches and thought to cause miscarriages. Major Weir, a self-confessed witch burned in Edinburgh in April 1670, was sent to the pyre along with a blackthorn staff, the "chief instrument of his sorceries". The straight shoots or suckers form the Irish *shillelagh* and the Welsh *llachbren*, both fearsome magical rods in their own rights.

In Ireland it was reckoned a Fairy Tree, and as such it was forbidden to be cut on Old Beltane (May 11) and Old Samhain (11 November). Country lore relates that lone Blackthorn bushes, especially those growing in an uncultivated field or upon a slope, are under the protection of the Sidhe.

The Spirit-Retinue of Blackthorn

Indomitability, Armamentation, Density, Vigilance,
Ruggedness, Severance, Imposition, Miserly
Gifts, Unwavering Faith, Overwhelming Force,
Cantankerous Resolve, Malignant Pondering,
and *Ruinous Vengeance.*

In the arcana of the modern witchcraft order Cultus Sabbati, Blackthorn is associated with the Devil and his function as the Opposer - the divider, sundererer, and agency of ordeal. This estate is perfectly embodied by a mature blackthorn hedge, which presents formidable, if not hostile, obstacles to passage. As the spines of the tree are hard, sharp and can attain considerable lengths, they can penetrate the flesh deeply, and often result in serious injuries or septicemia. These characteristics also align with the mythopoesis of the hideous *membrum diabolus*, grotesque in proportion, and painful in embrace.

If its thorns are the extensions of hell, the fruits of the Blackthorn are without doubt a dispensation of heaven, for they produce a rare vintage that is at once enlivening, salubrious, and quintessentially English. Many may wince at the thought of Sloe Gin, and justifiably so: as the perfunctory product of industrial commerce it is too often found wanting, and fails to exalt the noble qualities of the tree. Sloe Wine, however, is a different draught, particularly that produced under the care of an experienced vintner. Possessing a palate, body and finish worthy of competition with the best dessert wines, it is at once refined and rustic, a perfect and intoxicating emanation of the hedge. Those who have drunk of it have tasted wisdom, those who have vinted it are wiser still.

Black Pepper

Piper nigrum

Piperidaceæ (Pepper Family)

A TROPICAL vine native to South Asia, *Piper nigrum* is grown for its ripened, sun-dried fruit. Its leaves are elliptical or lanceolate, with flowers of yellow green, with numerous small spherical fruits borne on a spike. Though the culinary spice Black Pepper is the best-known product of this plant, it also produces the Green and White Pepper of commerce.

When imbibed, its effects on human flesh are stimulant, carminative, and sialagogue. As a topical, it is rubefacient; the essential oil is antifungal and antibacterial. Black Pepper is valued for its arousing, aphrodisiac properties, a virtue it shares with many close relatives in genus *Piper* such as Cubeb (P. *cubeba*) and Pippali or Long Pepper (P. *longum*). Among its many chemical consituents are the eponymous piperene ($C_{17}H_{19}NO_3$), which in part is responsible for its pungent aromatics, and piperidine ($C_5H_{11}N$). Extracts of Black Pepper are the subject of research into potential anti-cancer properties. Traditional use as a folk abortifacient is also known.

In the occult doctrines of planetary correspondence, Black Pepper most often inhabits the burning acre of Mars, because of its heating effects and swift action. Likewise, its governing element is Fire. However, due to its stimulating influence on the mind, we may also assign it to Mercury, especially when utilized alone and whole. It may also participate in the Mysteries of Venus due to its erogenous activity.

Its powers, as used in magic and ceremony, are Allure, Coercion, Warfare, Cursing, Unbewitching, and Reconciliation. Peppercorns may also be used to 'spice' an enchantment, i.e., *potentiate* and *synergize* the effects of other ingredients in the spell. The most effective and eloquent manner in which to be introduced to the physical and spiritual properties of the plant is to consume a single peppercorn by placing it in the mouth, and grinding it between the teeth, allowing the aromatics and their associated panoply of sensorial reactions to expand and fill the head.

The Spirit-Retinue of Black Pepper

Kindling, Combustion, Diffusion, Magnification,
Tingling, Inflammation, Zest, Robust Pungency,
Rapid Insight, Cascading Consequence,
Hostile Incursions, Seeded Dissent,
and Infectious Enthusiasm.

A Santeria spell to revive an injured romance recommends visiting the estranged lover, strewing ten peppercorns along the way, beseeching the help of Eleggua, Opener of the Way, in swaying the heart of the beloved.

In the folk medicine of modern Egypt, Black Pepper is esteemed as a specific for impotence. In other traditions of Islamic magic, forty Black peppercorns are burnt to sow discord between two people. A powder made from ground peppercorns and quicklime has traditionally been used by criminals as a means of temporarily blinding pursuers, by blowing the compounded mixture in their faces.

A Hoodoo charm from North Carolina for catching a witch requires black peppercorns to be cast upon a floor, forcing the victim to become occupied with counting the seeds. This spell falls into a category of magic known the world over, employing seed-scattering to confuse and obsess evil spirits. Black peppercorns were also used in Transylvanian charms against the evil Eye.

BLEEDING HEARTS

Dicentra spp.
Fumariaceæ (Fumitory Family)

A LOW-GROWING herb of the Fumitory family, noted for its yellow corms and unusual, pendulous flowers, some of which are heart-shared. The genus *Dicentra* has 8 species, with seven sepcies in North America, and one in Japan. The Asian Bleeding Heart, formerly *Dicentra spectabilis*, has been reclassified in genus *Lamprocapnos*, a part of the Poppy Family.

Medicinal use of Bleeding Hearts, even in folk medicines, was limited, its therapeutic properties being alterative, tonic, anti-syphilitic. Native Americans employed the herb as a vermifuge and as a specific for toothache. Cucullarine, a toxic alkaloid, is a notable plant poison occuring in some species, being anaesthetic and convulsive, but most cases of poisoning are restricted to livestock. There are many other isoquinaline alklaloids present.

Among the heavenly powers it belongs to Venus, owing to its erotomorphism, as well as its use in love-charms. Its preeminent spirit-power is Allure, used for attracting and beguiling paramours. These uses were documented among some Native American peoples. Among the Onondaga, *D. canadensis* was called "Ghost-Corn" and considered food for spirits. Dutchman's Breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*) was ascribed great power by the Menomini as a love-charm. In one such usage, a male suitor chewed the root, then exhaled its scent in the direction of the woman he sought to charm. After then circumambulating her, the charm was complete, and she was bound to him.

BLOODROOT

Sanguinaria canadensis
Papaveraceæ (Poppy Family)

A PERENNIAL woodland plant growing to 40 cm, native to North America, and found growing east of the Rocky Mountains, in moist shade, from Canada to the Southern United States. The flower, borne on a separate stalk as the large reniform leaf, has white petals with a yellow center. The genus *Sanguinara* appears to be monotypic. As with other valued native roots, Bloodroot is at risk in the present day due to poaching activity.

It is also known as Reed Root, Bloodwort, and Red Puccoon. Medicinally, it was formerly used as a cathartic, bitter, and escharotic, the latter for destroying warts. The portion concentrating the plant's power is the rhizome, from which blood-red juice pours forth when broken. Bloodroot has also been used in native medicine against colds, as an emetic and also as an antiparasitic. The principal alkaloid indwelling the rhizome is the eponymous sanguinarine ($C_{20}H_{14}NO_4$). Taken in small amounts, a small amount of the tincture was sometimes employed as a bitter. The seed is toxic and when consumed may induce violent delirium and diaphoresis.

In magic, it is used in operations of attraction, reversing, and protection from maleficia. In Native American magic, the Penobscots used necklaces of Bloodroot as a charm for stopping blood; it was also a valued red dye.

An Ozark spell carries a bit of the root in the pocket, or in a magical bag as protection from witchcraft. Bloodroot was also placed near the door or windowsill to protect a house against hexes. One spell to throw off hexes required bits of root to be cast on the doorstep of the alleged sorcerer. It was also used as a Hoodoo salve of reversing or protection, in combination with High John the Conqueror Root.

BLUEBERRY

Vaccinium spp.

Ericaceæ (Heather Family)

THE genus *Vaccinium*, which includes Blueberry, Huckleberry, Cranberry, and many other similar fruits, comprises about 225 accepted species of perennial or deciduous dwarf shrubs native to the northern hemisphere, mostly concentrated in North America and East Asia, but also in Europe. The fruits, being blue, purple, red or pink, are nearly universally edible. As a medicine, the juice is antiseptic, anti-emetic, and antidiarrheal. The berries are nutritive, containing vitamins, minerals, acids, and tannins. Consumption of the fruits has also been the focus of antioxidant tonic use, in support of general health.

In Germany, the berry has been employed as a flavorful adjunct to beers and meads. The fruits of Bog Bilberry (*Vaccinium uliginosum*), a Blueberry native to Eurasia, are considered to possess mildly inebriating virtues. Ingestion has sometimes produced delirium, dizziness or stupor; this is thought by some to be caused by a parasitic fungus (*Sclerotina megalospora*) that sometimes infects the fruits. In Switzerland, these berries are called *Schwindelbeeren* ('dizzy berries'); the one German name is *Trunkelbere* ('drunken berry').

As used in magic, Blueberry and its close relatives are used for Cursing, trickery, and Fortification. In North America, native species of Hucklebrry (*Vaccinium* spp.) have also been employed for spells of Curse-Lifting, Materialization, and Success. Inhaled as an incense, the smoldered flowers were an Ojibwe cure for mental derangement.

Huckleberries may be carried on the person as a gambling talisman to fog the mind of others during the game. Blueberry leaves are cast on doorsteps to curse the dwellers of the household.

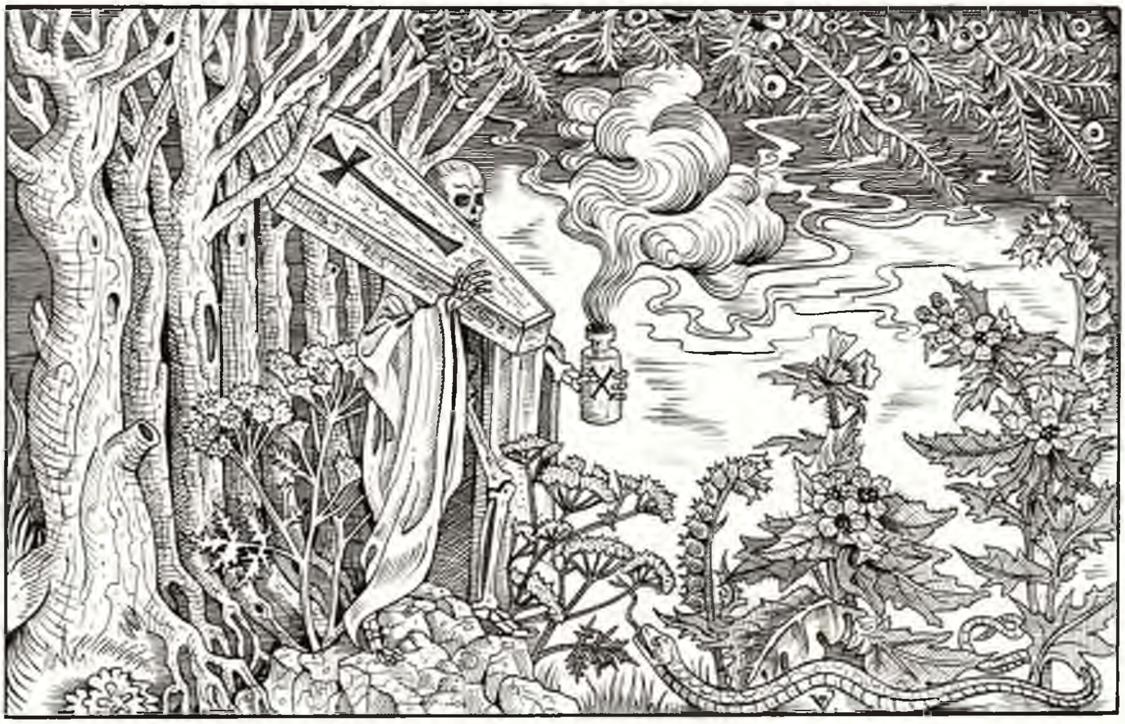
BLUE WITCH

Solanum umbelliferum

Solanaceæ (Nightshade Family)

THIS alluring nightshade is a hardy perennial shrub, native to the coast range hills of California, as well as Arizona and Nevada, and populating shrubland, oak chaparral, and mixed evergreen forest. Growing to one meter in height, it has downy, gray to glaucous leaves, sometimes forming a mounding shrub, with characteristic blue or pale purple flowers. Green ovoid fruits become yellow upon ripening. Thriving in poor and rocky soils, Blue Witch is particularly resistant to ground disturbances in its favored habitats, and is a common species appearing in the aftermath of wildfires. It is thought to freely hybridize with a similar wild California nightshade, *Solanum xanti*, whose form is larger, and its flowers a dark purple. Blue Witch can sometimes be found offered by native plant nurseries in California.

Various poisons associated with genus *Solanum* are present in the plant, such as solanine and the steroidal alkaloid solasadine; modern botanical surveys admonish us to not eat of this fruit, though they are reported as a traditional food



IN THE SHADOW OF THE ALMIGHTY YEW

source among the Ohlone people of California. Use of Blue Witch in folk medicine is reported, being an oil expressed from the fruits and used topically to treat acne; the root has reportedly been used for upset stomach.

It is a stalwart and comely companion in the xeric garden, but its essentially wild nature must be respected; with searching, one can find seeds or starts from nurseries focused on native plant species. My own are an admixture of local volunteers and the noble bloodlines of the Mount Diablo population; these thrive best when left to their own devices, rather than subjected to too much pampering.

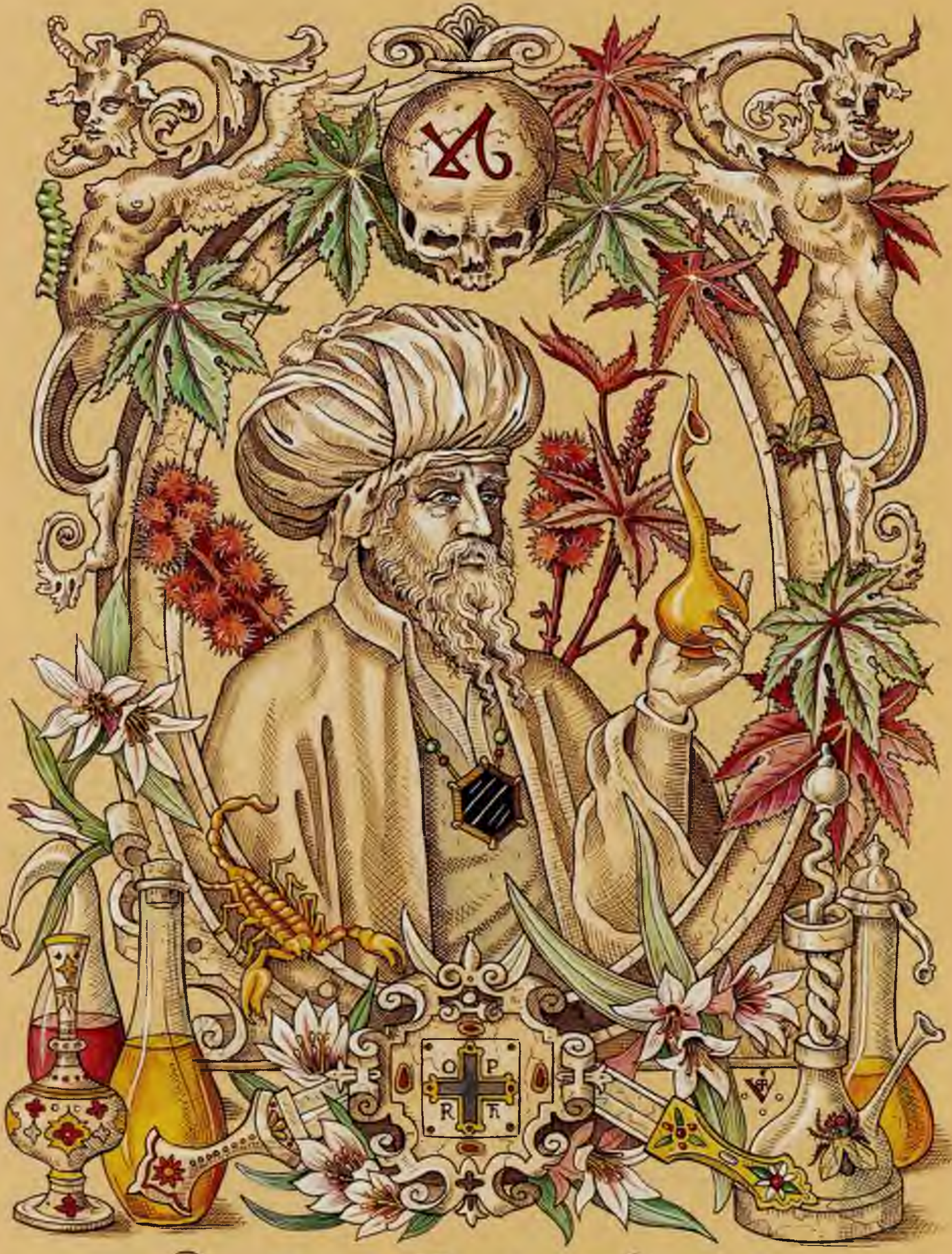
In planetary correspondence, Blue Witch is aligned with Saturn and the Moon, and its properties concern Coercion, Allure and Triumph. I use the dried leaves, mixed with equal parts Yerba Santa leaf and resin of Douglas Fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*), for a locally-derived incense adjunctive to prayer and meditation.

Concerning Plant Taboo

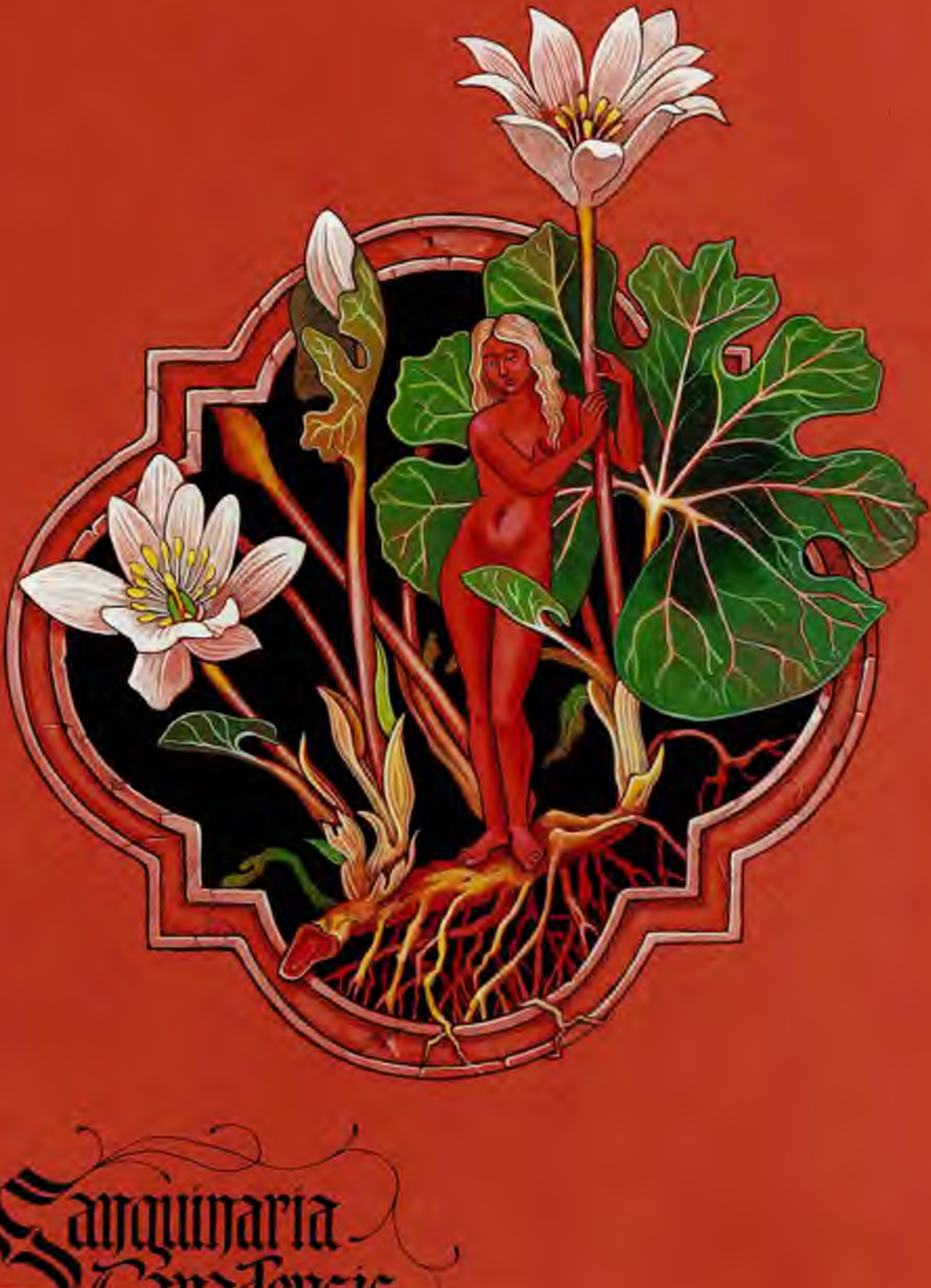
IN most locales where plants are gathered and used for power, some have associated bodies of lore directing their proper gathering and use and spelling out magical consequences for violation of these customs. Certain worts must be gathered at a certain time of day, or with specified purifications of the body, or using a unique cutting implement. In many traditions, some plants have their own spirit-song, or a local god or spirit who must be entreated to gather the plant. These rules are known as plant taboos, and though much dismissed by modern allopathic herbalists, they are rich and complex zones of occult power offering additional vistas of understanding plant mystery.

Admittedly, as some historians have proposed, a historical plant taboo may have arisen simply to protect the resource from being overharvested, either because it was rare or a valuable item of commerce, or because its use was reserved for a privileged class. However, many plant taboos emerge not from the formal strictures of religion or law, but through word-of-mouth folklore, from mother to daughter, father to son, herbalist to apprentice. These kinds of taboos are intended not as lawful proclamation, but as good counsel for the best usage and respect of the plant.

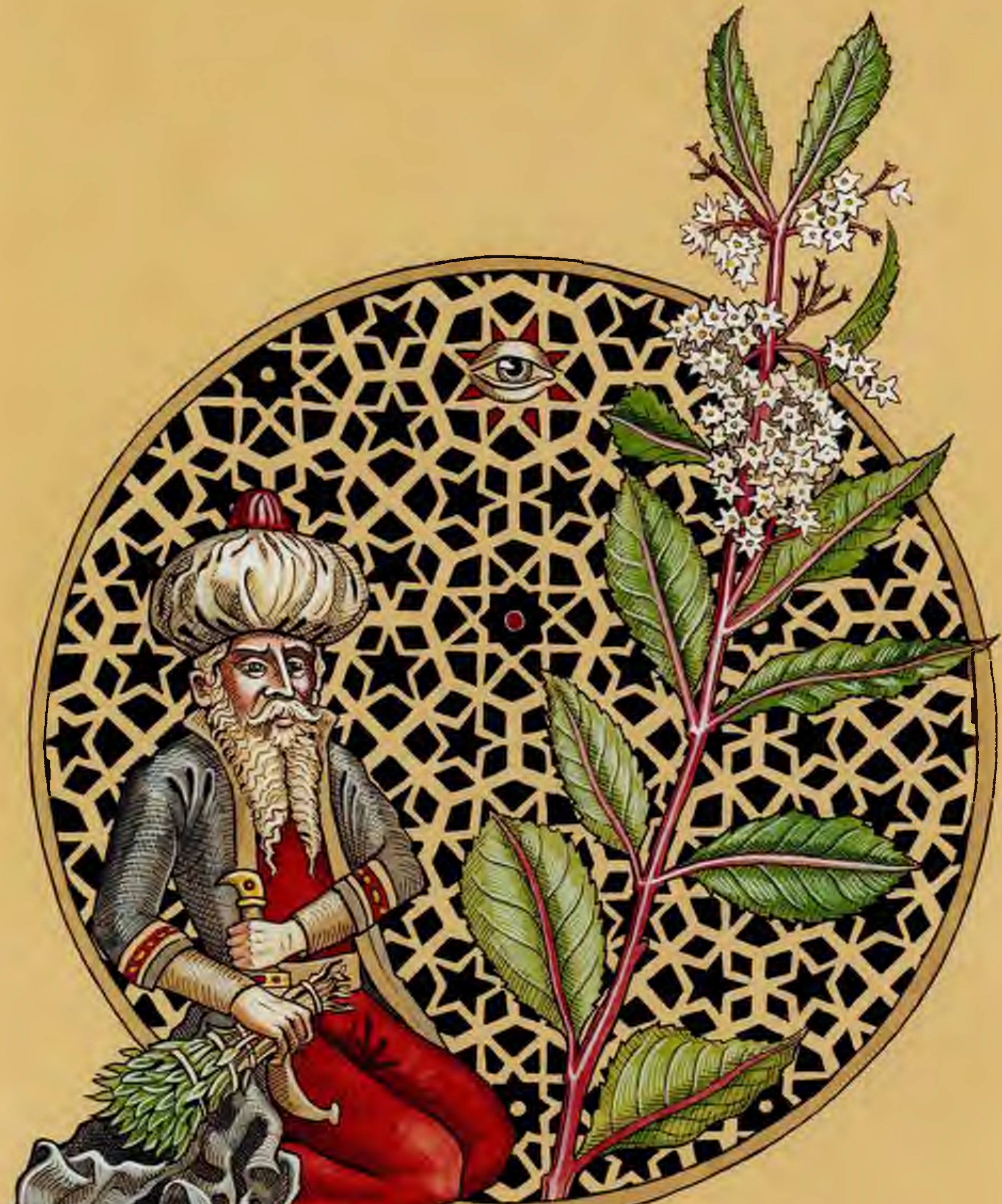
On the one hand, we may relate such taboos to what some might call superstition: an irrational causality, detached from the physical universe and its laws. An action is performed, rightly or wrongly, and it precipitates consequence. Frequently, this involves paying proper respect to the plant, or its retinue of spirits, or offending them by breaking the taboo. Consequences may



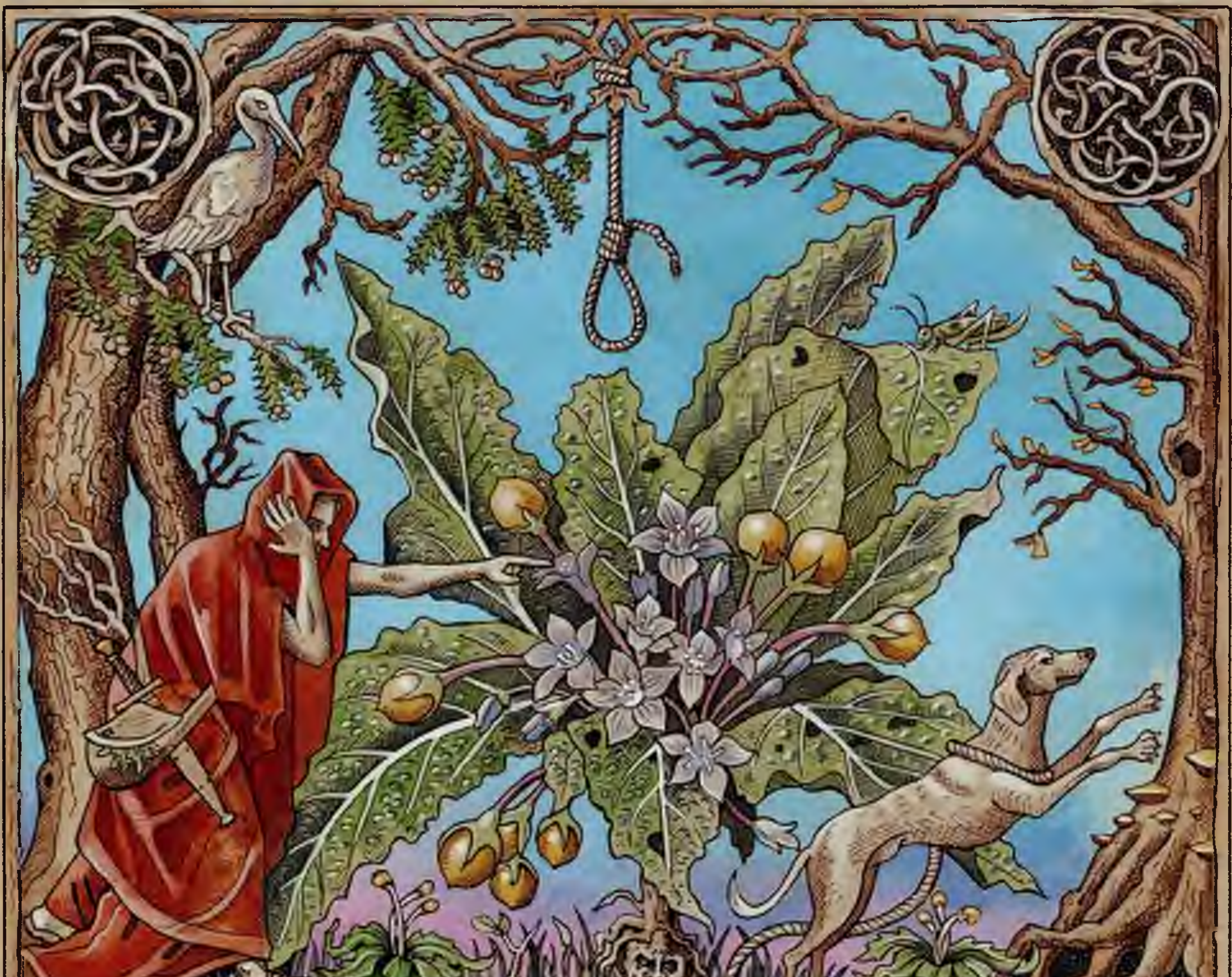
Sunt mala quae libas



Sanguinaria Canadensis



Catha Edulis



Witch gathering the Mandrake

be vague, such as tempting ill fortune, or very specific, such as being struck by lightning.

On the other hand, plant taboo may be viewed by the herbalist as aligning with decorum and ceremony, the 'proper way of doing things', in the same way certain rules of behavior govern human affairs. When considered from this position, taboo may conceal very sound ecological, medical or toxicological rationales in a mythopoetic form. To this day for example, many gardeners refuse to fell an Elder tree; the reasons for this vary, from superstitiuous fear, to proper manners, to according the tree a kind of 'personhood'. Of those to whom I have spoken who are not particularly superstitious or 'spiritual', when asked about consequences for breaking this rule, my questions have been met with a disturbed and perplexed silence.

In the British Isles, one encounters with certain plants fairy-taboos, wherein the 'hidden folk' must be appeased, respected or otherwise left alone. The best known is the prohibition of iron implements when cutting herbs. While never a perfect corollary, similar plant-taboos regarding the propitiation and honor of liminal beings exist worldwide, such as the *menehune* of Hawai'i, or the *jinni* of the Islamic world.

In some cases, a plant taboo spells out a consequence that to modern ears sounds ridiculous. Yet when we observe the taboo to be broken, and the consequence becomes reality, we are offered another avenue of learning.

A practical use of respecting plant taboo, besides the basic virtue of respect and a taboo's connectivity with ancient plant tradition, is the state of mind incepted by embracing its protocol. If a plant requires certain prayers, offerings, or scheduling for its most empowered harvest, it offers the practitioner access to an additional sphere of power surrounding the plant, within which one experiences the plant differently. Often, the arena of taboo and its respect is woven about with powers that are not entirely within the human practitioner's control. The states thus generated are useful in removing one from the mundanity of self and ego which can interfere with the meditative state. Any singular plant taboo, besides its actuation through the deed of gathering and use, may thus serve as a point of contemplation, a trajectory of occult power or lens through which to view and understand the plant's greater esotery.

BONESET

Eupatorium perfoliatum

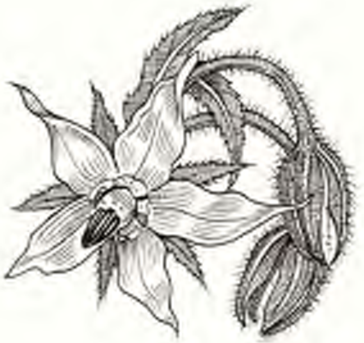
Asteraceæ (Sunflower Family)

BONESET is a clumping herbaceous perennial growing from 0.5 to 1.5 meters in height, common throughout the Eastern United States and Canada, populating meadows and damp areas. Its long, lanceolate leaves are arranged opposite, the plant producing white, corymbose flowers. The generic name invokes its powers as a supreme antidote, deriving from Mithridates VI Eupator, King of Pontus (135–63 BCE), whose mastery of, and immunity to poison made him legendary. The genus *Eupatorium*, comprising the True Bonesets, contains about 125 accepted species, and collectively is also referred to as *Thoroughworts*. Boneset readily adapts to the garden, where it flourishes in moist soil and part shade.

The aerial portions of the herb are those containing the medicinal virtue; its therapeutic virtues, as accessed by traditional and folk medicine, are as a cathartic, diaphoretic, and tonic. In accord with its vulgar name, the plant was an old-time remedy, as well as preventative, of 'bone-aches'—in reality, pains of the muscles and joints—particularly those accompanying colds, flu or Dengue fever. In folk medicine it is a sweat-producer, as well as a reliable laxative. Made into an infusion, Boneset was a valued treatment for colic, especially when accompanied by constipation. The infusion, if drunk tepid in large doses, will assuredly produce vomiting; in small doses, drunk cold, it will promote perspiration. As with Comfrey—another herb associated with mending sprains and soft tissue injury—some species of *Eupatorium* contain pyrrolizidine alkaloids and are therefore disparaged by modern medicine.

Its magical principles are Curse Lifting, Triumph, Banishing and Beneficence. In planetary correspondence, Boneset is principally aligned with Venus, and the element of Water. Added to incense, Boneset can be used to banish disease-causing spirits and promote healing; it may also be used as the basis of antidotal magic or generalized exorcism. Strong decoctions of the leaf are used as purifying baths or washes, allowed to air-dry on the skin. For this latter usage, it combines well with similar brews of the leaves and flowers of various Broom species such as *Genista*, *Spartium* and *Cytisus*.

In North America, among the Forest Potawotami, the native Boneset known as Trumpet Weed (*E. purpureum*) was used as a talisman to promote luck and riches, as well as increase gambling winnings. The Navajo used *Eupatorium* species as an antidote for arrow-poisoning, and among several tribes it was regarded as a counterpoison.



BORAGE

Borago officinalis
Boraginaceæ (Borage Family)

BORAGE is a hairy annual herb growing to 1 meter, native to Europe, and thriving in gardens and well-drained sunny locales. It has blue five-petaled flowers with black stamens, and is pleasantly odorous, redolent of cucumber. Its fruit consists of 4 dark brown nutlets. Its iconic appearance is both hirsute and superficially resembling the plants of the Nightshade family, radiating an aesthetic savour of witchcraft, and for its appearance alone it is a formidable presence in the garden. Indeed, in phylogenetic kinship it is allied to the Viper's Bugloss, also a plant of mesmerizing appearance suggestive of enchantments. Also known as *Buglossum*, Borage is greatly loved by bees, though it should not be their main forage, as insipid—and potentially toxic—honey may result.

The leaves and flowers are the portions used. In diverse traditions of herbal medicine, it has been used as an antispasmodic, febrifuge, and galactagogue, and is credited for provoking cheerfulness and lifting the spirits. Infusions of the herb and flower were used to treat depression and malaise; the flowers and leaves were also traditionally brewed into ale. Juice expressed from the crushed plant, vigilantly applied to infected areas, has been used against ringworm and other noxious *Tinea*-related usurpations of the skin. Borage bears some morphological and chemical kindship with Comfrey, with whom it shares a botanical family, notably its content of pyrrolizidine alkaloids, which in sufficient concentration are an offense against the liver.

The occult powers of Borage are Triumph, Healing, Exorcism, and Protection from Disease. In planetary correspondence, it is aligned with Jupiter, with a secondary rulership of Venus. The fresh flowers are used for strewing ritual, and, in culinary tradition, for eating. Folk magic invoked the herb to exorcise disease-causing spirits from sick persons; a seventeenth century potion from England comprised of Elderflowers and Borage-water was recommended for increasing youthful vigor. Equally good is a strong infusion used as a body wash and allowed to air dry.

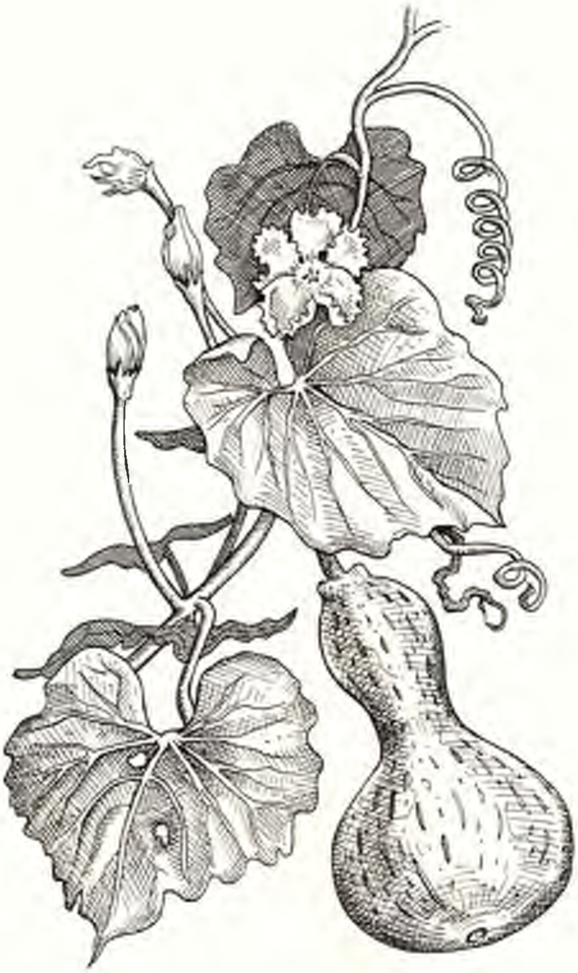
In South America, indigenous Andean Qechuans esteem the plant, known by its local name *Borraja*, for its powers of cleansing, as well as a medicinal for such conditions as cold and irregular menstruation.

BOTTLE GOURD

Lagenaria sicereria
Cucurbitaceæ (Gourd Family)

CALABASH, as the Bottle Gourd is also known, is a slow-growing annual vine, with white flowers, and green fruits, which swell into a variety of rotund shapes. When golden-brown and mature, the hard shelled grourds serve as a principle material for making bowls, cups, vessels, and pipes. It is a primordial human crop, one of the first plants to be domesticated for use other than food, with a probable point of evolutionary origin in South Africa, but now grown in warm areas worldwide.

Due to their capacious nature, the fruits are valued as vessels in magical usage, sometimes used as spirit-traps for constraining demonic forces. In North American magic, for example, a hollowed-out gourd hung over the bed is used as a Hoodoo charm to prevent the spirit of a deceased loved one from haunting. *Lagenaria sicereria* is used by Native Americans of the Southwest for ceremonial rattles. It also serves as the basis for other traditional musical instruments, such as the Hawaiian *Ipu*.



The Spirit-Retinue of
the Bottle Gourd

Containment, Reservation, Appetite, Parturiency,
Ripening, Distension, Dehiscence, Gaping,
Embodiment, Storage, Miserly
Hoarding, Ravenous
Hunger, and Fecund
Vacuity.

In magical operations, the Bottle Gourd is also used for offertory and curse-vessels, filled with fragrant herbs, *mumia*, and other combustible materials before being burned. It is also watertight, and can be used to fashion containers for Tobacco, kinnickinnick, or other herbal preparations. In particular, it excels at storing tree resins, whose accumulated dust coats the interior of the gourd-vessel over time, serving as a preservative and agent of mummying.

BRACKEN FERN

Pteridium aquilinum
Dennstaedtiaceæ (Bracken Family)

A FERN with near cosmopolitan distribution, Bracken often defines the nature of the woodland understory, being prolific and pervasive, and an eager colonizer of bare ground. Its leaves are 1 meter long, and usual specimens grow to a similar height. The original generic name *Pteris*, originates from *pteron* (a feather), in reference to the appearance of the fronds. The portions used are the leaves, rhizome and sporangia.

The medicinal characteristics of Bracken are diuretic, digestive, antiseptic, and astringent. As employed in folk medicine, the fern was used for stomach troubles and to draw infectious cruor out of tumors and lesions. The plant contains starches, and salts of potassium have traditionally been rendered from its ashes. Bracken fiddleheads are eaten both as a delicacy and famine food but are known to contain the carcinogen ptaquiloside ($C_{20}H_{30}O_8$), and so must be leached and cooked. Traditional beers in Norway and Siberia have used Bracken in their worts.

As found in magical operations, Bracken Fern is used for protection, weather magic, invisibility, and as a ward against lightning-strike. Some reckoned its power as apotropaic, and Saint Hildegard of Bingen considered Bracken a potent talisman against enchantments and demonic possession.

Bracken smoke, being assertive, acrid, and carrying distinct 'green' aromatic characteristics of the weald, has served several purposes in folk tradition. Fumes from the burning fronds were valued for driving away fleas and other insect vermin. A seventeenth-century English custom employed the burning or smoldering fronds to summon rain, and taboos on burning the plant because of this still abound in some places in the countryside.

In various traditions, Fern sporangia or 'seed', including that of the Bracken, conveys supernal power and knowledge, or serves to reveal the location of hidden treasure. In the Middle Ages, these spores were thought to bestow the magical powers of invisibility on the sorcerer if gathered on St. John's Eve, the only time when they were said to be visible. In some lore, it was thought to bestow eternal youth.

Bracken Fern also has diabolic associations, the seed being used in some traditions to conjure the Devil; in the Eastern Carpathians it is sometimes known as Devil's Rib.

Box

Buxus sempervirens
Buxaceæ (Box Family)

THE Boxwood genus *Buxus* contains nearly 70 species of hardwood shrubs and small trees, with distribution nearly cosmopolitan. Species diversity is concentrated in Asia, East Africa, and the Caribbean. The European Box, which is most associated with the lore of western occultism, is *Buxus sempervirens*, growing from 1 to 8 meters in height, having evenly bright-green oval leaves 2–3 cm. in length. The flowers, though indistinct, provide a heady scent. Mature, unpruned individuals have attained heights of 15 meters, and ages of 300 years. In 'developed' countries, Boxwood is most often encountered as an element of formal estate gardening, scuplted into hedges, rows, and the imaginal fancies of topiary. It is one of the most ancient trees domesticated as a garden ornamental, and was well known to the Egyptians, and later the Romans.

Its adaptability to gardens and landscape artifice has gained it great renown over the centuries, and Boxwood has long been prized for its impeccable virtue in woodworking. Its wood possesses a noble combination of attributes: hardness, density, and smooth grain. This makes it ideal for carving, and produces objects with great durability, excellent polish and a satisfying heft. It was from ancient times used for furniture inlay, small effigal scuplture, and fashioning wine-cups. It was also used for fashinoning Etruscan flutes; archaeological excavations in Switzerland in 2004 discovered an intact *auenis*—an instrument related to the panflute—fashioned of Boxwood, dating to the 1st century CE. It is considered the premier wood for engraving and apprenticing oneself to this art is a sublime route to understanding the tree's power.

Its leaves are toxic, and emetic, and emanate a distinctive odor, a repugnant spoor experienced strongly in large stands of wild individuals. The venomous principle of Boxwod arises in part from steroidal alkaloids, some of which function as immunosuppressants; contact dermatitis is also common. According to Pliny and other sources, the noxious influence of the tree affected honey produced by bees who fed on its flower nectar, making it bitter, and in some cases driving those who ate it mad. In some folklore, the plant was associated with sterility and impotence, and it also has associations with the virgin's bower, and the May Queen.

In European magic, it was particularly aligned with the planetary influences Jupiter and Saturn, especially in the grimoire tradition, though older streams of Graeco-Roman lore assign the tree to the dominion of Pluto. Box has ancient association with funerary rites, and boughs of the shrub were used as talismans to drive away corrupt influences. Bundles of burning Box sprigs are used in Italian magic to provide beneficent influence and blessing.

In some parts of the British Isles it was planted near the door as a ward against witches and their malevolent art; this exemplifies the particular principle of occult herbalism known as a *House Ward*, being living guardians of the domiciliary threshold, situated at critical locations on the property.

Its status as an evergreen gave rise to associations with immortality, and sometime use as a funereal talisman. Box was occasionally planted as a cemetery tree, as much for this symbolism as for its versatility in the landscape. Sprigs and boughs of the Box-tree contribute to a lesser-known tradition of Yuletide greenery, which nonetheless persists today.

The old heathen art of *botanomancy* divined auguries from the crackling of dry Box leaves burning, or the same being crushed between the hands. In German occult traditions, Boxwood possessed the power to drive away the Devil. In Lombard traditions, the plant was a useful talisman against the Evil Eye.

The Spirit-Retinue of Box

Athanasia, Enshrinement, Versatility, Continence,
Exemption, Compactness, Consternation,
Discontinuity, Pugnacity, Funereal
Gloom, Dark Exclusion,
Lurking Poison and
Mephitic Airs.

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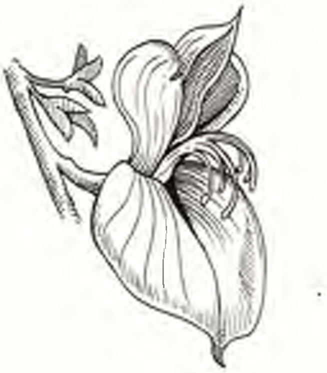


Broom

Cytisus spp., *Genista* spp.
Fabaceæ (Pea Family)

THE vulgar name 'Broom', present in the folk botanical lexica of many cultures, refers to a plant whose straw or dried ærial portions may be bound and used as a whisk, large or small. It may encompass plants from many genera, but in English-speaking countries and Western Europe, Brooms are most often perennial leguminous plants with yellow flowers. Each of the two genera *Genista* and *Cytisus* contain species known commonly as Brooms, the former boasting 85 separate species and the latter about 55. The genus *Spartium* (Spanish Broom) contains only some species, *S. junceum.* Because morphology is so similar, taxonomy is complicated, and some of the Brooms freely hybridize in the wild. In general, the Brooms are shrubs and sub-shrubs, occasionally arboriform, to 2 meters in height, with showy blossoms. *Spartium* and *Cystisus* are mainly native to the Mediterranean but have naturalized in domains of allied climate. *Genista* is distributed through Europe, Africa, and West Asia.

In folk medicine, Broom has been used as an antihemmoragic, cathartic, diuretic, emmenagogue, purgative, and vasoconstrictor. The herb formerly had renown as a vigorous lymph tonic and was used to treat dropsical conditions. In large doses the herb is emetic; the ærial portions were used as a cathartic and diuretic in medieval medicine.

Brooms are generally allied with the planetary influences of Mars, but also the Sun. As used in magical operations, the plants embody the powers of purification, protection from maleficia, warfare, and lust. Because of their hardy habit, and tendency toward colonization of waste ground, the plant is especially valued in magical operations of battle, conquest and occupation.

The blossoms and aerial portions are the parts used. The flowers, fresh or dried, have traditionally been strewn about rooms to chase repulsive spirits. In Italy, branches were burned on Christmas Day for their smoke, a magical specific against the Evil Eye. Spiny branches of *piorno,* (*Genista hystrix*) are used in Spanish folk magic against the Evil Eye.

For an annointing salve appropriate for clarivoyant and oracular work, the dried flowers may be infused in oil. This preparation, imbued with the provocative and catalytic virtues of Broom, may be liberally applied to the Ajna and Sahasrara chakras, as well as the temples, prior to meditation.

Cytisine, a toxic pyridine, is present in the plant, as well as the psychoactive Mescal Bean (*Dermatophyllum secundiflorum*). Other toxic principles, especially prevalent in *Cytisus scoparius*, include sparteine, isosparteine, lupinine, hydroxylupinine, and sarothamnine. *Genista* species contain n-mythalcytisine, lupinine, s-dehydrolupinine, anagyrine, and termopsin.

According to some sources there are groups such as the Yacqui who utilize the blossoms of Broom, in particular Canary Island Broom *Cytisus canariensis* (formerly *Genista canariensis*), as an inebriant and adjuct to sex magic; and the seeds, according to Christian Rätsch, as the basis for a sorcerous 'time-traveling' potion. The blossoms are sealed for a period of time in a hermetic vessel, then ground and smoked as a visionary ally. I do not, nor does anyone I know personally, possess experiential data to confirm the value of this, although there are some documented clinical studies, as mentioned in Dale Pendell's *Pharmako/Poeia.* Perhaps the visionary nature of the blossoms is due to a fungus infesting the blossoms, or, as Pendell speculates, an overlooked chemical virtue such as a terpene. No doubt, conceled within the wretched veil of headaches that accompanies the smoking of these flowers, there is a Green Mystery which will reveal itself when it chooses.

The Spirit-Retinue of Broom

Prosecution, Disjection, Pursuance, Sequestration,
Suscitation, Catalysis, Buoyancy, Fluorescence,
Furor, Dispersal, Entrenched Heat,
Phlegmatic Valour, and
Stark Nobility.

BRYONY, BLACK

Dioscorea communis

Dioscoraceæ (Yam Family)

KNOWN also by the name of *Elphamy*, the toxic herbaceous perennial Black Bryony possesses a climbing, vinelike habit, growing to 3 meters in height, and preferring damp woods, coppice, hedges, scrub and other marginal areas. In the wild it is often seen using nearby plants for support, and is identified by its large cordate leaves, veined and glossy. Its small flowers are dioecious, greenish yellow, and open in late spring to early summer. The conspicuous fruits, suspended from tendril-like stems, are red, spherical berries appearing in autumn. Black Bryony puts forth a massive, thick tuber, gray to black in color; when broken, it reveals white flesh, and exudes a fœtid, acrid juice. This noisome fluid, containing histamines among other dermatitic principles, has long been known as an infamous skin irritant. The plant ranges from North Africa, through Europe, to parts of Great Britain, and its genus was until recently classified as *Tamus*.

Also known as Lady's Meat, or Our Lady's Seal, Black Bryony is sometimes called Mandrake, or in some cases Womandrake, though it is of no botanical relation to *Mandragora officinarum*, even though it flaunts a substantive, poisonous 'root'. Rather, given its position within family Dioscoraceæ, it might better be known as the Devil's Yam, given its relation to those esculent tubers better known to human agriculture. It is known in Wales as Serpent's Meat because of the belief that snakes lurked near to where the plant grows, yet there is also about it an ophidian sense based on its rambling form and growth habits. When encountering the plant in the wild, one experiences a sense of having stumbled upon it, or invaded its privacy, and that its field of spiritual influence is far greater than that occupied by its physical body. Appearing of a sudden in dream, it is equally disquieting.

Among its powerful irritant poisons are saponins and calcium oxalate. Despite its caustic nature, its action on the skin has been prized in folk medicine as a powerful rubefacient; it is also a strong emetic and diuretic. As a topical, its medicinal virtues are usually concentrated in the form of a rhizome tincture, or in the form of a cataplasm or sliced portion of root. Other folk remedies have used the rhizome as a tonic and anti-rheumatic. Both the shoots and the tuber, after purging by boiling or roasting, have been eaten as a wild-foraged food.

Among the planets, Bryony's powers are strongly Martial and Solar in nature, and its corresponding element is Fire, though it is sometimes also attributed to Earth. In magical operations, the rhizome is chiefly used as an amulet, for charms of Coercion.

The Spirit-Retinue of Black Bryony

Hardiness, Ambition, Vehemence, Disruption,
Blistering, Malodor, Retching, Sanguinous
Effusion, Deceptive Appeal, Evil Fruition,
Cadaverous Pallor,
Penetrating Acridity, and
Eruptive Pustulation.

BRYONY, WHITE

Bryonia alba and *B. dioica*

Cucurbitaceæ (Gourd Family)

ASSERTIVE in form, and monstrous to some, the White Bryony is a perennial vine with creeping habit, having palmately lobed leaves, red berries, and fleshy, succulent root which sometimes resembles that of Mandrake. It may grow vertically to 3 meters, and the entire plant wafts a malodorous stench as its sovereign proclamation and warning. *Bryonia*, as a genus, encompasses about 10 species with points of evolutionary origin in Turkey, Afghanistan, and the Mediterranean; *B. dioica* inhabits Britain, Eurasia and North Africa. In archaic magico-medical taxonomies White Bryony was sometimes called Womandrake; its obstreperous qualities have given rise over the centuries to various names associating it with Satan, such as Devil's Turnip.

Juice proceeding from the root and berries is a drastic purgative and is so effective in this therapeutic that it was formerly official in the

British and American pharmacopoeias. Bitter and nauseous in taste, root juice was obtained by hollowing out the root and collecting the liquid which accumulated in the cavity. As a poison, tincture of Bryony in sufficient quantity is capable of inducing paralysis and convulsions.

A deadly plant, the root contains two poisons of note, these phytotoxins being triterpenoid-like bitter principles called cucurbiticines, namely are bryonin and bryonidin. Juice from the fresh plant, or the emetic fruits, can disturb the skin on contact, giving rise to blisters. When taken internally, considerable doses of Bryony provoke a bloody diarrheal discharge with severe cramping and inflammation of the kidneys and gastrontestinal tract. It is reported that eating less than 40 berries will cause paralysis, coma, and death by respiratory arrest. As with many plants largely considered venomous, recent scientific research has shown that Bryony compounds, while posessing undeniably dangerous potentials, have anticancerous properties, checking the growth of certain types of tumours.

> *Now it remains that we shew how we may fashion Mandrakes, those counterfeit kind of Mandrakes which couzeners and cony-catchers carry about, and sell to many instead of true Mandrakes. You must get a root of Brionie, or wilde Nep, and with a sharp instrument engrave in it a man or woman, giving either of them their genitories: and then make holes with a puncheon into those places where the hairs are wont to grow, and put into those hole Millet, or some other such thing which may shoot out his roots like the hairs of ones head. And when you have digged a little pit for it in the ground, you must let it lie there, until such time as it shall be covered with a bark, and the roots also be shot forth.*
>
> GIAMBATTISTA DELLA PORTA
> *Magia Naturalis*, 1588

Among the emanations of the planets, it is generally attributed to Mars, but in some sources Mercury. Its magical uses include deception and trickery, warfare, and the creation of carved fetishes. As a living garden specimen, it well serves an apotropaic function, echoing its former magico-medicinal uses as a cathartic of demons injurious to the body and mind, as well as its ancient Egyptian use in rites to overthrow Apophis, the great Opposer.

In Slavic traditions, the root of Bryony was a familiar spirit capable of revealing thieves. Some surviving 'Mandrake' fetishes in occult museums are in actuaity made from Bryony, which in the early modern herb trade was sometimes sold as Mandragora. Knowledge of making such root-witching fetishes enjoyed some circulation in print, though much of the same information was repeated. However, due to a superficial resemblance of the root, and their general virtue of poison, the two plants have little else in common botanically.

The Spirit-Retinue of White Bryony

Exuviation, Subversion, Liquidation, Affront, Recoil, Bombast, Sourness, Stultification, Rank Fabulation, Acerbic Reflux, Entrenched Diablerie, Gross Ideation, and False Accusation.

Root-Witching and the Unseen Hand

SORCERY using dried roots as fetishes of power, sometimes known as root-witching, spans a wide geographical and temporal ambit. Such roots may be carved into fabulous and horrific faces, engraved with runes, or simply dried in their natural forms. The Alraun traditions of Europe are one such body of lore; another is the root-helpers often known as *hands* in Hoodoo and African American magic.

This rationale is extended to other below-ground plant parts such as rhizomes, corms, tubers, stolons and bulbs, which are similarly used. These plant parts are not technically roots; each is of a type well known to botanists as a MUS, or *modified underground stem*. Many, such as the tubers of Oxalis and Potato, serve the function of food storage for the plant, but others such as Ginger and its relatives also contain some of the plant's most potent medicinal and aromatic compounds. Above all, a root or modified underground stem serves as a concentrator and accumulator of a plant's power, an aspect that is not lost in root-sorcery.

Although any root, or modified underground stem, may theoretically be used for such ritual purposes, certain plants tend to be favored. In many cases the natural shape of the root in question is visually arresting, suggesting a preternatural intelligence; or otherwise emanates a fascination due to its texture or proportion. In many cases, such roots also possess strong poisonous, cathartic, or aromatic principles, which are also often aligned with their magical purpose. The malleable, or carvable, natures of certain rootsocks, such as Mandrake and Bryony, also grants them favored status among those who practice these rites.

The essence of root-witching emerges principally from the morphology of the plant: that portion thriving below the ground, operating unseen, in darkness. The hidden, lightless aspect of the root naturally participates in such magical zones as invisibility, darkness, and death. Additionally, the subsoil kingdoms embrace the Devil and the infernal realm, entities which intersect so-called 'black magic': what operates here is apart from, or apostate to, the natural order, a status often resonant with sorcery itself. The arena of power in which the root naturally dwells, and later operates magically, is thus concealed from profane view. Because of this, it is rightly considered an agent of magical subterfuge.

Mirroring this station, the use of such roots is characterized by their hidden placement on the body of the user, in a pocket or pouch, where they may operate in their preferred place without observation. Activation, or 'excitement' of the root comes from vigorous rubbing, or by anointing with various oils, washes, wines, or other liquid sacrifices. The root may also be suffumigated with ritual incense, offered prayers, or set to repose within a shrine while it carries out its charges.

Attending on some roots are complex rituals of harvest, some descended from shrouded antiquity. Such rites specify the day, time, planetary aspect, proper attire and accouterments, exhortations and prayers, offerings, and other ceremonial elements for digging. Also accompanying magical root-harvesting rules are dread warnings of the consequences for failing to heed them, or of lurking, malevolent entities guarding the plant. We read, in some modern reflections on these ritual accounts, that such superstitious practices emerged and were perpetuated by root-sellers and simplers as a means of guarding the resource. While this may certainly have happened, none can discount the efficacy and spiritual intimacy of ritually gathering one's own plant material; if one has had any degree of herbal and botanical training, it also gives one direct control over quality and choice of materials. In essence, it establishes a *provenance*, such that when one uses the root, one knows exactly its plant origin, consecration, and subsequent chain of custody.

FETISH-ROOTS

Adam and Eve
Angelica
Belladonna
Beth Root
Blackberry
Briar
Bryony
Calamus
Chewing John
Chicory
Datura
Devil's Bit Scabious
Devil's Shoestring
Elecampane
Galangal
Ginseng
Henbane
High John the Conqueror
Iris
Ivy
Mandrake
May Apple
Orchids
Parsley
Potato
Scammony
Scopolia
Valerian

* * *

BUCKEYE

Aesculus spp.
Sapindaceæ (Soapberry Family)

A QUIETLY majestic woodland presence, the Buckeye is identified by its distinctive palmate leaves, showy panicle inflorescences, and large, round seeds, known to folklore as conkers. The approximately 16 species of Buckeye tree are northern temperate in distribution and range in height when mature from 6 to 40 meters. The seed is rich in complex and pharmacologically significant poisons, and the wood of many species is excellent for carving. The largest and best-known tree in the genus is Horse Chestnut (*A. hippocastanum*), endemic to the mountains of southeastern Europe, but often found planted in parks across the northern hemisphere. Diversity of *Aesculus* is particulary rich in North America, with 7–8 distinct species represented. It is only superficially related to true Chestnuts (genus *Castanea*), though it often grows in association with them.

The smooth, round seeds, which fit neatly in the palm, have long transfixed human fascination and accrued magical significance. Carried in the pocket, the seed of the Buckeye is an Ozark charm against rheumatism, and lore relates the carrier of a buckeye is also smiled upon by Fate, and in some cases protected from death. As documented by American ethnologist Vance Randolph, Buckeye-fetishes were also used in the same region as a charm against witchcraft. An old method of protecting oneself from witches was to take a buckeye in hand and stand facing the rising sun. A hole was bored in the buckeye with a sharp-pointed flint rock while a secret charm was repeated; the person executing this charm was then believed to be immune to any harm from witches. Along the Atlantic Coast, the seed was traditionally carried in the pocket for good luck or magical power.

Buckeye species contain varying levels of toxic saponins; in India, the fresh, pounded bark of *Aesculus assamica* has traditionally been used to poison fish in Aruchal Pradesh. Æscin, a coterie of saponins found within many Buckeye species, has been identified as an effective treatment of veinous insufficiency, laboratory work reaffirming centuries of use for this purpose in herbal medicine. Despite the poisons which saturate the raw kernel, various traditional leaching strategies have been developed over time which render it edible, as ethnobotanical data in North America, Japan, and India attest. The Kawaiisu people of California, for example, leached the seeds in sulfur springs.

In North America, the ancient Moundbuilder societies of Ohio, in one of the final phases of creating the burial mound, ritual fires were kindled as part of the interment. Blankets of bark were burned over the central interment, and the builders would cap the carefully-prepared earthen layers with a ritual fire. Archaeologists Elliot M. Abrams and Ann Corinne Freter have documented several tree species from charcoal recovered from sites in association with the mounds, including Buckeye, Oak, Ash, Hickory, Walnut, Elm, Maple, and others.

BUCKTHORN

Rhamnus cathartica

Rhamnaceæ (Buckthorn Family)

A HARDY shrub growing from 2–3 meters in height, Buckthorn has branches which grow at right angles and terminate in a sharp spine. These cruciform branches have given rise to the German folk name *Kreuzdorn* or Cross-Thorn, signifying its protection from demons, punitive nature, and the dark legacy of Christ's Crown of Thorns. Its flowers are inconspicuous, presaging a dark black, drupe-like fruit. Deciduous, it grows in wet woods, oak woodland and scrub; in many places, it is considered a noxious weed. The berries of many species render a yellow dye.

There are in excess of 100 species of *Rhamnus*, mostly inhabiting the northern hemisphere. The best-known species in European magical lore is R. *cathartica*, also called Hexenthorn. In North America, Cascara Sagrada (R. *purshiana*) or 'Sacred Bark' in native to the Pacific Northwest, grows to 20 meters and is also an important source of purging medicine. Though not widely known, it forms the basis of several commercial laxatives produced by industrial pharmacy.

Medicinally, Buckthorn wields the powers of both purgative and hepatic, each allied to its ponderous Saturnian disposition. Both the berries and their expressed juice are a potent cathartic, usually provoking nausea, thirst, dryness of the mouth and throat, and, quite often, verbal complaints. Buckthorn has been used as a hydragogue cathartic specific to drospy, as well as for rheumatism and gout. Its action as a cathartic is slow, and most cases of poisoning occurs when insufficiently educated persons self-medicate, increasing their dosage when they grow weary of waiting for the herb to take effect. The toxic principles are mostly anthracene glycosides, concentrated chiefly in the seeds. Symptoms of poisoning include severe bloody diarrhea, vomiting, and fever.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF BUCKTHORN

Abstersion, Assuredness, Attrition, Riposte, Jinx, Involution, Amputation, Boundaries, Barricades, Robust Armaments, Haggard Thickets, Shadowed Vigilance, and Earthen Redress.

Like its great strength in medicine, its powers in sorcery and magic center on the expulsion of evil and as a protection from demons and bewitchment, and accordingly it is considered a tree of Saturn's dominion. Buckthorn was considered so potent in is powers of expulsion that eating animals which had fed on the tree was believed to transfer its cathartic power directly to the person, according to some Native American lore.

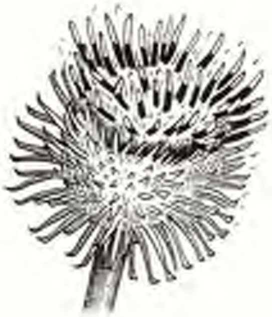
As an herb of exorcism, the tree has recurring traditional use as a barrier against the wayward dead; the 16th century Italian physician Pierandrea Mattioli reported use of the branches, hung on doors and windows, against the intrusions of malefic magic. In investigating witches' flying ointments, Hans Peter Duerr, referencing a 1909 text by Strackerjan, reports that the witches of Münsterland rubbed themselves with the juice of the Buckthorn. The branches of the tree are used in Prussian sorcery to strike blows at witches and evil spirits, and vessels fashioned from the wood a sovereign against witchcraft.

BURDOCK

Arctium lappa

Asteraceæ (Sunflower Family)

STALWART and possessive of its ground, Burdock is an opportunistic herb growing to 1.5 meters and is noted for rounded sagittate leaves, purple flower heads, and prickly, bur-like fruits. Though native to Europe, the herb is naturalized throughout the United States, along roadsides, in old fields, and near buildings; it favors damp soil, and is also found populating ditches and moist meadows. In magical use, the portions utilized are the root, seed, and seed capsule. Roots and seeds are used in plant medicine.



In the human body, it functions as a blood tonic, circulatory, nutritive and diuretic. The seeds, as well as the root, have a well-deserved reputation as a blood purifier. Burdock is an excellent tonic to guard against the ravages of colds and flu, the fresh-sliced root may be eaten raw or cooked into soups. Tinctures or decoctions of the root may be taken to cleanse the blood, treat skin disorders, and combat kidney stones. Decoctions may also be used topically for skin ailments; a preparation of Burdock and olive oil is often prescribed for itchy and scaly scalp conditions. Ongoing research suggests the seeds' potential as a cancer inhibitor.

It is aligned with Venus and Saturn, and its powers in magic are Wealth, Love, Vigor, Healing, and Protection from Maleficia. An old Romany charm against rheumatism used the seeds, placed in a small bag and worn around the neck.

In North America, a traditional Ozark charm for protecting children consists of a rosary strung from pieces of dried Burdock root and worn around the neck. Likewise, the seeds may be strewn about the home in rites of chasing, to rid the domicile of minor spiritous intruders. In Poland, it was used as a charm against witchcraft.

In Scotland, the spiky pods of two species of Burdock comprise the hoary mantle of the Burry Man, an enigmatic figure appearing each year in the second Friday in August, in the vicinity of South Queensferry, Lothian. The Burry Man is adorned head to toe with pods of Burdock, wearing a bowler and a reversed balaclava bearing holes for eyes, nose and mouth. Attendants bedeck him with a Union Jack, and four roses on his front and back. The strange vegetation spirit then proceeds to walk the town boundaries, paying stops to public houses, collecting money. Importantly, whisky plays a role, which he is offered at each visitation through a straw, necessitated by the state of his prickly ecrustation. At the end of the evening he returns to the town hall. Some believe the Burry Man to accrete and carry away the unsavory and noxious spiritual influences from the village. The origin of the custom is unknown; some consider him a modern manifestion of the errant spirit of the Green, who wanders the land spreading fecund blessings; others suspect the rite to be descended from the ancient tradition of the scapegoat.

Cornish folk wisdom explains the downy Burdock tufts which litter the fields as the remnants of a night-congregations of fairy-folk, who ride about on ponies and strewn the land with hair from their manes.

BURNET, GREATER

Sanguisorba officinalis, S. canadensis

Rosaceæ (Rose Family)

BLOODROOT is a perennial herb of low gound and valleys, Greater Burnet has juicy pinnate leaves, with small purple flowers borne on low spikes. Its generic name *Sanguisorba* denotes the absortion of blood, a reference to its power as a hemostatic, and the collective genus are considered Burnets.

A rich source of tannin, particularly Sanguiin H-6 ($C_{82}H_{54}O_{52}$), the root of *S. officinalis* has a reputation for staunching blood and hemmhorages. For topical wounds, a poultice may be made. As with other tannin-bearing plants such as Bramble, an aqueous extraction of the plant has been used to arrest diarrhea. For internal use, make an infusion of 30 g of the above-ground parts of the herb to a 0.5 liter of boiling water. The greens were eaten as a pot and salad herb.

In planetary correspondence Burnet resonantes with the Solar affinity. In the human body, its allied body part is the heart, and by extension the blood. This correspondence is, generally, in agreement with the plant's station within the Rose family.

As lending its power to magical operations, Greater Burnet possesses the virtues of consecration, protection from maleficia, and reversing.

During times of plague, Burnet was chewed to protect against evil vapours and the spread of contagion. Garden Burnet (*S. minor*) is used in the healing ceremonies of Peruvian curanderos, for conveying blessing and treating lovesickness.

BURNET SAXIFRAGE

Pimpinella saxifraga

Apiaceæ (Dill Family)

KINDRED to Anise, Burnet Saxifrage is also known as *Bibernelle* or Ventian Theriac. A perennial growing to 1 meter in height, it has odd compound-pinnate leaves and umbels of white flowers. It is known for its long taproot, pungent with hot, parching aromatics. Meadows, pastures and embankments, are its favored haunt. The plant is native to Europe and introduced into North America, in many places it is designated invasive and the subject of eradication programs.

In country medicine it is a sialagogue, carminative, and bitter, and was used for indigestion; in mammals, particularly humans and cows, it was thought to promote milk production. The seed has been used to flavor ales, wines and liqueurs, and the root has particularly been used in bitters. Owing to the astringency of the root, Burnet Saxifrage has also been used as a gargarism.

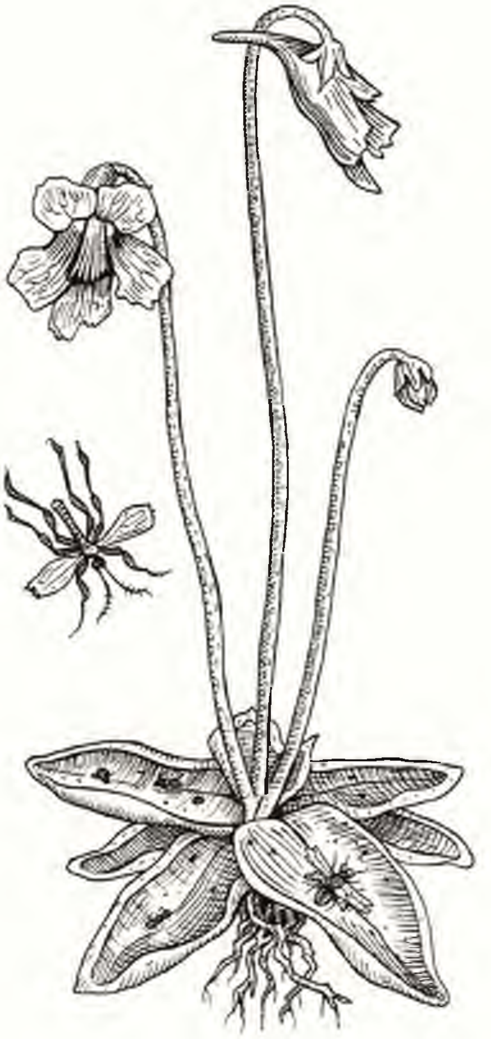
Among the planets it is favored by the Sun; in magic, its powers are Protection, Beauty, and Healing. In Europe the plant was used as a charm against malefica, demonic attack and varied sorceries, worn around the neck as an amulet. Burned as a purifying smoke or fumigant, it was also also esteemed as a protector against plague.

BUTTERWORT

Pinguicula vulgaris

Lentibulariaceæ (Bladderwort Family)

A SMALL Eurasian perennial herb to 15 cm high, growing on rocks in moist places, rocks, and saturated soils, with rosetted leaves and small purple or violet flowers. In some situations, Butterwort was given the pejorative name Rot-Grass because it was thought to cause ailments of sheep and cattle. In Norway, the herb was valued as a kind of vegetable rennet for thickening fresh milk. The True Butterworts, genus *Pinguicula*, consist of about 50 accepted species worldwide.



All Butterworts are carnivorous; their nutriment is derived by luring, trapping and digesting insects with sticky leaves. This property of lubricious enticement empowers and is in accord with the plant's use as a love-charm by women in Scotland. To win the affections of her desired man, a maiden plucked the plant, artfully weaving it into a small hoop (*cuach*). Should the man kiss her while the talisman was in hidden in her mouth, the charm would become active, cementing his affections for her.

Where its imprint on magic and folklore is substantial, Butterwort has been regarded as an apotropaic, particularly in Norway and the Scottish Highlands, where it protected against fairies who might malign dairy herds. The presence of Butterwort also prevented fairies from stealing comely infants. In combination with Juniper, it was employed as a charm for protection from magical misdeeds.

CACHANA

Liatris punctata

Asteraceæ (Sunflower Family)

DOTTED Blazingstar, as Cachana is also known, is a multi-stemmed plant native to North America, bearing a spray of purple flowers, growing to just under one meter. It inhabits the vast prairie of the Central Plains, ranging from southern Canada south to northern Mexico, and into parts of the Southwestern US. The herb possesses a long, thick root, made the sturdier by the plant's longevity; some specimens live to ages in excess of three decades. In Native American pharmacy, it was used as a cure for pneumonia, a skin wash, a urinary aid, and the root was sometimes eaten after roasting. In the southern United States, it is used in root-magic, particularly that of the Southwest. Dried roots are carried to protect from the Evil Eye, and for protection from *maleficia*.

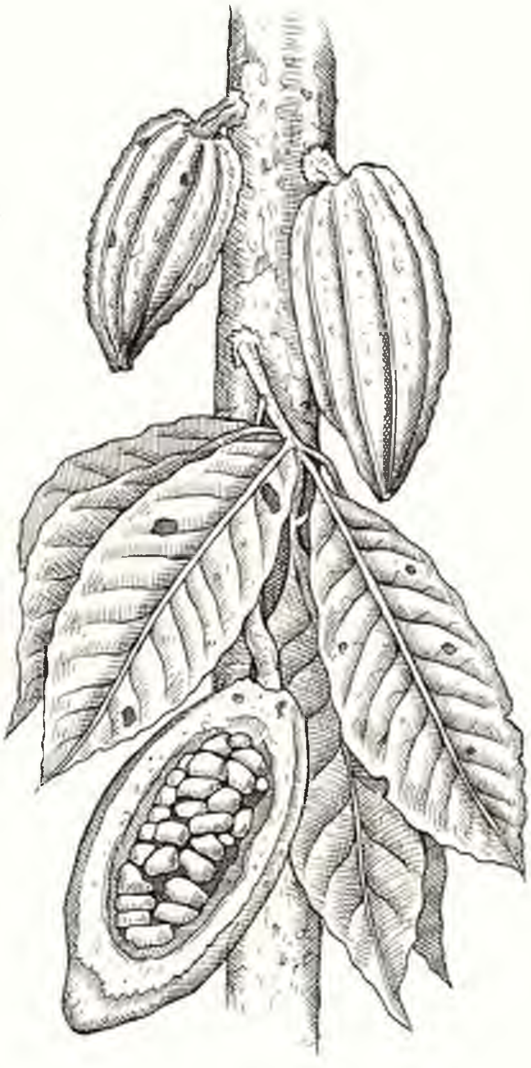
CACAO

Theobroma cacao

Sterculiaceæ (Sterculia Family)

A TROPICAL tree native to South America, with its center of biological origin likely the Orinoco Valley of Venezuela. Cacao attains a maximum height of 12 meters, with oblong-obovate leaves to 20 cm in length, tiny yellow blossoms and large, ridged spheroidal fruits of a ruddy-gold color to 20 cm long. The seeds, whilst not leguminous, are commonly referred to as 'beans'. Its generic name *Theobroma* means 'Food of the Gods.'

Its powers over the body are stimulant, aphrodisiac, diuretic, and emollient, the latter quality arising from its fatty butter and affirming well the tree's place among the moist, soothing plants of the Mallow Family. In medicine, Cacao is also used as a diuretic; it has a reputation as an antihypertensive, as it well and duly dilates the blood-vessels. The roasted and fermented seed is the prime botanical portion of note: the lipid portion forms cocoa butter, a virtuous emollient used in lotions, balms, and unguents; the seed with the fat removed is cocoa powder, in which many of the phytognostic and magical properties abound.



> *The Confection made of Cacao called Chocolate or Chocoletto, which may be had in divers places in London at reasonable rates, is of wonderful efficacy for the procreation of children: for it not only vehemently incites to Venus, but causeth Conception in women...*
>
> WILLIAM COLES
>
> *Adam in Eden, 1657*

Traditional Mesoamerican love-philters employed a concoction of roasted Cacao seeds, Matico, Vanilla, Cayenne, Cinnamon, Cup of Gold (*Solandra* spp.), and Cacahuaxochitl (*Quararibea funebris*). In Aztec medicine, the Cacao beverage was used as a base into which therapeutic remedies were mixed. As ethnopharmacologist Jonathan Ott notes, these sacred chocolate potions were also used as a vehicle for the ingestion of psychoactive mushrooms, in particular, species of *Psilocybe*. The Spanish Franciscan friar Bernardino de Sahagun, extensively documenting Aztec culture and the Nahuatl language in the mid-1500s, provided first-hand reports that the traditional Cacao drink of the Aztecs provoked dizziness, derangement, and confusion.

The expansive gardens of Moctezuma II were unrivalled, containing plants from the furthest boundaries of his dominion, many of which were necessary ingredients in the Cacao drink. Specimen plants included were the choicest cultivars of Cacao and Vanilla, as well as *Enterolobium cyclocarpum*, the fragrant Izquixochitl (*Bourreira huanita*). and *Talauma mexicana*. The gardeners planting these specimens observed solemn rituals of autosacrifice, sprinkling the soil with their own blood. Traditional formulations of the Cacao drink use the blossom of the Funeral Tree *Cacahuaxochitl* ('precious flower') which cause them to froth and foam.

CACAO ALKALOIDS

Theobromine	$C_7H_8N_4O_2$
Caffeine	$C_8H_{10}N_4O_2$
Phenylethylamine	$C_8H_{11}N$
Anandamide	$C_{22}H_{37}NO_2$
Tryptamine	$C_{10}H_{12}N_2$
Spermine	$C_{10}H_{26}N_4$
Spermidine	$C_7H_{19}N_3$

The chemical profile of chocolate reads like an ultra-concentrated high-test sex potion. Cacao contains the alkaloid theobromine, similar to caffeine, which is a CNS stimulant. Its action on muscle, the kidneys and heart is more pronounced than caffeine, giving rise to greater vigor. It also contains Anandamide, a euphoria-producer which binds to cannabinoid receptors. Small amounts of phenylethylamine PEA are also present, the chemical group which includes MDMA or 'ecstasy'. Spermine and Spermidine, polyamines first isolated from human semen, also occur in cacao after the process of seed fermentation, essential for chocolate making. With the addition of sugar and sometimes milk, the whole is bound in an irresistible corpus both seductive and sensual.

In planetary correspondence, the virtues of Cacao are aligned both with Venus and the Sun. Its powers in magic and ritual in Love, Attraction, Consecration, Illumination, Strengthening of Will, Protection and Exorcism. Wild Cacao species such as *Theobroma bicolor* are employed as adjuncts in many phytognostic preparations of South America. The Tucuna use the ashes of *Theobroma subincanum*, another species of chocolate, as an adjunct in ceremonial tobacco-snuffs.

Rosaries of European Christians used the seeds as sacred beads, dried, strung and joined by metal links. The fragrant, flowering branches were used in Aztec rituals, and the seeds have also been burned as an incense to expel evil spirits Among the Kuna peoples of modern-day Panama, the seeds are burnt and inhaled by particpants in female puberty rites.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF CACAO

Nobility, Exuberance, Enthusiasm, Bittersweetness, Pœsis, Sateity, License, Romance, Perfumed Gardens, Forbidden Enticements, Fleshly Stimulation, Fecund Tumescence, and Voluptuous Desire.

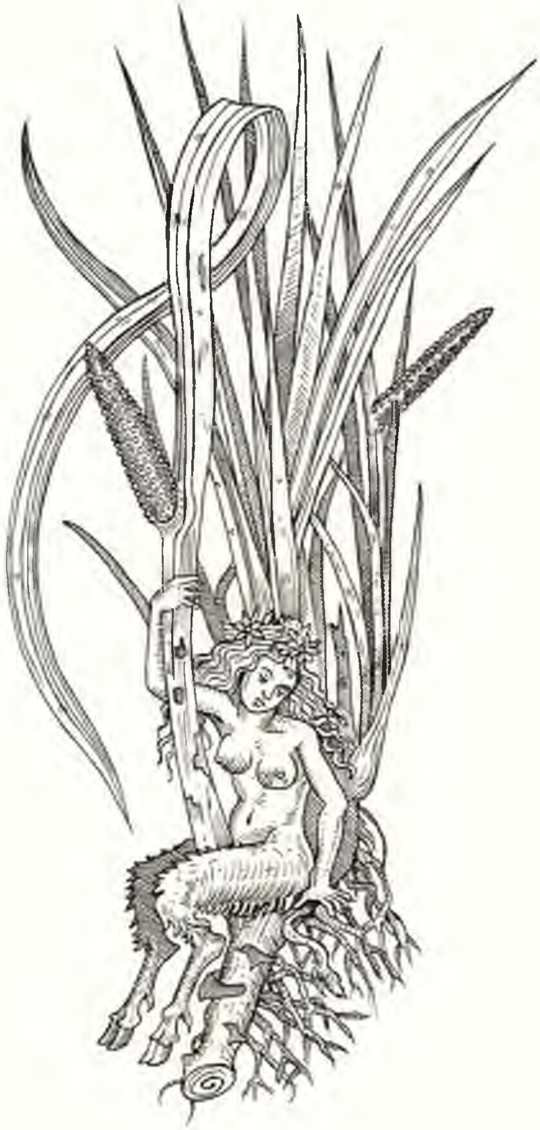
CALAMUS

Acorus calamus

Acoraceæ (Sweetflag Family)

SWEETFLAG or Calamus is a tall, sword-leaved plant blossoming during May and June, with a thick, creeping rhizome found near marshes, ditches, ponds, and brooks in Europe, Asia, and North America. As an ornamental, it thrives in water gardens. There are two species of Acorus: *A. calamus*, and *A graminaeus*. The latter is a nursery plant; its odorous leaves are used to exorcise evil spirits, but internal consumption should be avoided. *A. calamus* is the principal species of occult interest.

Four millennia of known human usage testifies to its power, beginning with the Sumerians and Egyptians. Dioscorides, who called it *Akoron*, noted medicinal uses, among which was its efficacy in treating cough, combined with the smoke of Terebinth resin. Among modern Europeans, Sweet Flag is a favored confection, and its rhizome is candied like Ginger as a digestive; it has also lent its flavor to certain celebrated liquers such as Chartreuse and Benedictine. Those making Absinthe will note a small minority of traditional formulae using Calamus, which when present adds a subtle but unmistakable aromatic dimension.



Ancient mention of Calamus in perfumes, oils, incenses and charms is of some debate. Some botanical historians propose that what was called Calamus was indeed a kind of Sedge (*Cyperus* spp.) or a Gentian; though there are few candidates among these genera which possess a similarly powerful and intoxicating odor as Calamus. Another more likely candidate is Ginger Grass (*Cymbopogon martinii*), which, like many species in the genera, posesses powerfully fragrant virtues. *Andropogon* species with aromatic roots may have also been the ancient 'Calamus.' Its aromatic fractions can be translated into ceremonial or medicinal smoke, and it has enjoyed some use in this fashion historically by Native Americans.

An herb of Solar affinity, Calamus is a stimulant, aphrodisiac, and especially aligned with Helios in its capacity as a mild tonic. It has been used to treat colic, fever, cramps, nausea, and digestive weakness. A small length of root may be chewed and the resulting juices swallowed to remedy heartburn or digestive upset. The rhizome of has been esteemed in folk medicine as an anti-tumor agent.

Prolonged chewing of the root is known to induce a subtle visionary ecstasy, most suitable as an adjunct to silent divination, devotional prayer, or trance-communion with plant spirits. A length of fresh root chewed will provoke euphoria and hilarity, precipitating a gnostic state similar in many respects to the onset of psilocybin-bearing mushrooms. At lower doses, the effect is more inclined toward those of a stimulant. The quality of the gnosis varies from person to person and cannot be predicted by numbers and exacting dosage. As Sweet Flag is strongly aromatic, the flavor is resinous, pungent, and somewhat medicinal; many will be repulsed.

Whether chewed as a meditative sacrament or expressed for its fragrant virtues in liqueurs, perfumes, or incenses, we are obliged to rely in the first instance on fresh material. The dried root, when compared with the aromatic spectra of the living plant, is but a skeletal remnant of its former self, retaining all of the bitter principles, and little of the sweet or spicy. Perhaps worse, enigmatic the spirit-presence, so embodied in the live plant, has fled the dried root entirely. For this reason, barring availability of fresh material, the compounding herbalist is advised to use root tincture for edible mixtures and essential oil for perfumes. Chemical virtues include beta-asarone; asarone, camphor, eugenol, calamenol, azuline, calamene, acorin, methylamine, camphene, dimethylamine, and trimethylamine; all indwelling the essential oil. Asarone content is largely related to geography and lattitude; tropical plants produce up to four times the amount of plants grown in temperate climes.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF CALAMUS

Reverie, Enlivenment, Expansiveness, Fruitage, Revelation, Figmentation, Haleness, Puissance, Sensual Abstraction, Erotic Fancy, Paludal Voluptaries, Sodden Agorae, and Perfumed Oracles.

An ancient Coptic fisherman's spell to increase bounty in the nets utilizes extract of Calamus. Similarly in North America, the Chippewa employed a decoction of Calamus roots used on fish nets as a charm to incease their catches.

Among Native Americans it was a widespread medicine, enjoying a variety of uses in pharmacy magic wherever it grew. Among the northern Cheyenne of Montana, Calamus was referred to as Ghost-Medicine, and deemed especially effective in keeping nightmares and other intrusive nocturnal spirits away from children. For this purpose, a piece of the root was strung round the neck of the child before going to sleep. The Cheyenne also employed the plant as a ceremonial in sweat lodge ceremonies and regarded the plant as a Witchcraft Medicine. Warriors of the Teton Dakota masticated the rhizome, smearing the paste on their faces as protection from fear and anxiety when confronting the enemy.

Echoing its power against demons in Native American sorcery, Chinese lore relays that the sword-shaped leaves are regarded with fright and disgust by noxious spirits. In India, the Malayali tribe bound the rhizome into charms worn on infants to protect them from evil.

The root may be added to ritual baths prior to magical workings, especially sexual magics, or oracular work. The infused oil serves as an excellent balm of anointing. In Europe, Calamus has also been used as a strewing herb.

CALIFORNIA POPPY

Eschscholzia californica

Papaveraceæ (Poppy Family)

THE California state flower is an annual or short-lived perennial herb with feathery glaucous foliage and deep gold flowers. Though native to California, its seed has in recent times been exported far distant locales as a sought-after garden plant for its showy blossoms. It was with some amusement that, during my first visit to England I beheld the flower being kept as a pampered specimen, when days earlier I had been walking the East San Francisco Bay hills, blanketed with wild *Eschscholzia*. The plant readily re-seeds, and though many regard it as a weed where I live, it is always welcome in my garden.

Early Spanish settlers in the Americas christened the plant *Copa del Oro*, thinking the golden-flowered herb filled the soil with the precious metal. Indeed, when seen densely blanketing the Coastal Ranges in late winter, its bright gamboge flowers evoke the rapacious, gold-driven delusions of of colonial Spain.

In medicine and magic, it is the root, leaves, flowers and capsules which are used for their peculiar properties. A Native American spell to pacify rowdy children at bed-time was to place one or two blossoms of the Poppy beneath the bed. The Mendocino Indians used the narcotic root for its 'stupefying' effect. The plant contains the Opium-related alkaloids protopine, chelerythrine, sanguinarine, alpha and beta-homochelidonine. Some research indicates that the Poppy assists the the body in the absorption of Vitamin A.

California Poppy Tincture.

¶ The calmative effect of the plant can easily be harnessed in the form of a tincture. A handful of fresh root, washed and chopped, is placed into a sterile jar, and given sufficient distilled spirits (60% ABV) to cover. Because of the woody, slightly bitter taste of the root, a spirit which has spent some time aging in a barrel—such as rum, whiskey, or *añejo* tequila—is preferred, as the tannins and other wood compounds will harmonize best. The marc is macerated for two weeks, strained and bottled. A dropperful of the tincture, taken alone or in a glass of water, is sufficient to ascertain its effect.

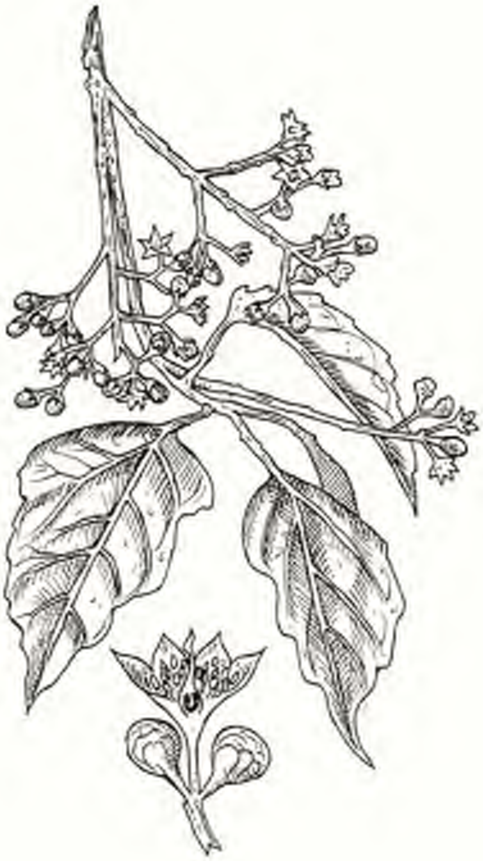
CAMPHOR

Cinnamomum camphora

Lauraceæ (Laurel Family)

CAMPHOR is an evergreen tree native to East Asia, particularly Indonesia, growing to 25 meters, possessing fragrant yellow-green leaves. Raw camphor ($C_{10}H_{16}O$), the aromatic product of commerce, is harvested from trees in excess of 50 years of age by driving it off from the wood using steam. In ancient China, the tree was so revered for its healing virtues that by decree the penalty for felling one was death; in Japanese folklore, the spirit of the Camphor tree commands power over the elements. Camphor is frequently planted in gardens and landscapes in temperate areas of the world.

The parts used are the resin and its derivatives and leaves; sometimes the wood or red berries are also favored. Crude crystalline camphor, a severe poison in large doses, is often refined into an essential oil. Oil of Camphor appears in several grades: brown, yellow, and white. Some are considerable poisons; white Camphor is preferred for smoldering, being the least toxic of the three. If broken pieces are sprinkled with a few drops of spirits of wine, it may be readily ground with a mortar and pestle. Pure Camphor resin is soluble in rectified spirit, oils and vinegar.

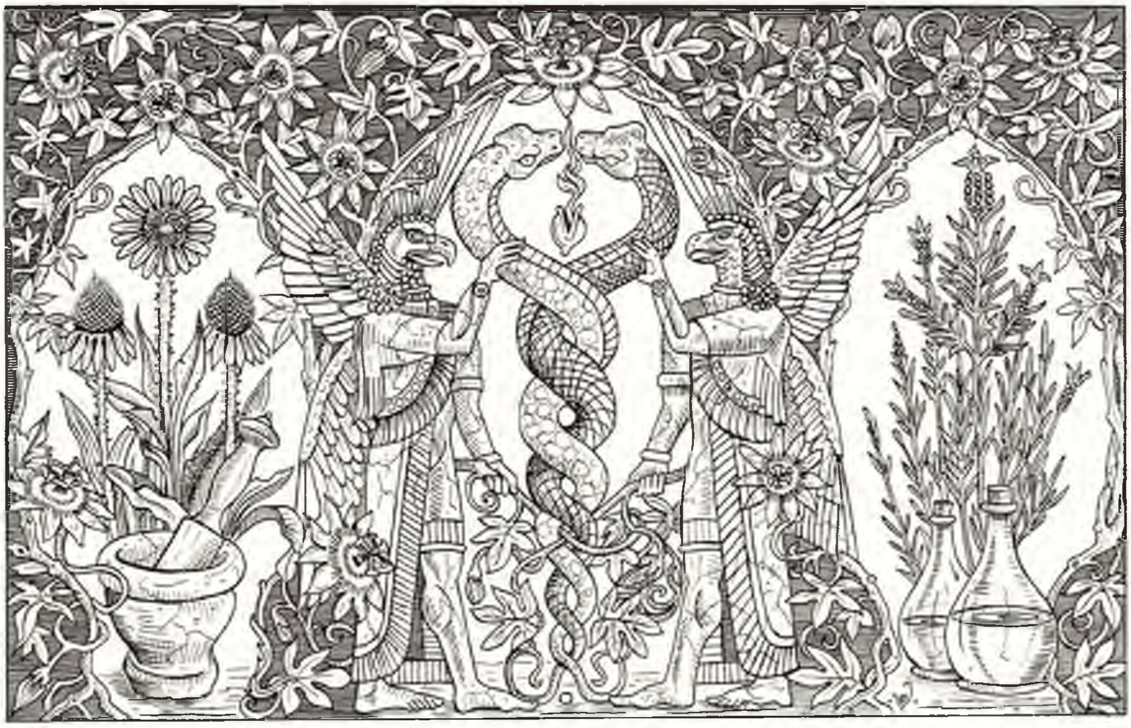


Though the tree is Solar in nature, the resin—the portion more often encountered in occult formulae—is Lunar. In magical operations, it lends its strengths to rites of divination, summoning, and exorcism. It also has some association with the magical polarity of sexual arousal and chastity. Camphor resin, in judicious amounts, is an effective ingredient in incenses used for meditation and trance induction.

Historically, the resin appears in several incenses of European ritual magic and necromancy. The 14th century grimoire *Liber Juratus* features a recipe for a Lunar suffumigation whose principal constituents are Camphor and seeds of White Poppy; a similar recipe later appears in Agrippa's *Three Books of Occult Philosophy.* In the *Grand Grimoire*, the conjuration of the devil Lucifuge, prince and master of rebel spirits, is prefaced by burning copious amounts of pure camphor in the brazier. Camphor-bearing incenses are also to be found in *The Key of Solomon the King*, wherein is found an incense of the Moon compounded from White Sandalwood, Camphor, Aloes, Amber, pounded seeds of Cucumber, Artemisia, and Ranunculus. The grimoire *Almadel* specifies a planetary perfume for the Moon consisting of Camphor and Aloeswood (*Aquilaria* spp.).

A remedy from the ninth-century *Book on Poisons* by Ibn Wahshiyya makes use of Camphor as a counterpoison. The formula is a venom-drawing topical used for relief of the bites of venomous flies, and is prepared from rosewater in which first camphor, then white sandalwood, have been dissolved. This same formula is employed for inhalation to clear breathing passages.

The resin also is associated with death and the funereal arcanum. Moroccan funerary custom inserts a camphor-soaked cotton into the bodily orifices of the corpse after death, and Camphor is also used for washing the dead in India.



Against the Pestilence

Plague Medicine and Magical Plants

THE Black Death of the fourteenth century is conservatively estimated to have killed one third of the population of Europe, with other data supporting even greater mortalities. The agent responsible was the bacterium *Yersinia pestis* ,which overran other parts of the world, also causing massive loss of life. As a response to the outbreak, and partially emergent from the ambient stratum of medieval natural magic, the discipline of Plague Medicine arose.

In part, the etiology of plague and other diseases relied on miasmic pathology theory, attributing the virulence to 'evil airs' arising from the fetor and putrefaction of dead and rotten things, swamps, sewage, and graveyards. Through this diagnostic lens, the pollution thus generated rendered the air infectious, and was the ultimate source of disease epidemics.

Plague Medicine made use of a large number of plants, in various preparations, to combat malodorous air, and these constituted a distinct pharmacopoeia. In addition to their strengths against pestilence, plague-plants also frequently possessed the magical properties of Exorcism, Banishing, or Protection from Maleficia. A classic example of this is the demonifuge Rue, also used as a folk insecticide against fleas and lice. Stinking roots such as Valerian also had the power to drive plague away. The guild of corpse-washers protected themselves from infection with Germander (*Teucrium scordium*). Other plants such as the Dalmatian Chrysanthemum (*Chrysanthemum cinerariifolium*) contain a class of strong, naturally occurring pesticides compounds collectively known as pyrethrins, which are frequently aerosolized and used in modern agriculture.

Plague Medicine constitutes a unique stratum of European magical medicine, one that was pervasive and enduring. Talismanic and medical stratagems overlapped and worked in tandem. The beak in the plague physician's crow-mask, for example, allowed for the inclusion of aromatized herb-bunches, pomanders, and other magico-medical talismans to protect the wearer from plague vapors.

One of the most salient artifacts of this stratum of botanical magic was a preparation known as Four Thieves Vinegar, created by the steeping of camphor and other strong-smelling Plague Herbs in vinegar. The preparation was used to

SELECTIVE CHEMISTRY
OF PLAGUE PLANTS

COMPOUND	FORMULA	GROUP	ACTION	SOURCE EXEMPLAR
Thymol	$C_{10}H_{14}O$	phenol	antibacterial	*Thymus vulgaris*
Camphor	$C_{10}H_{16}O$	terpenoid	antibacterial	*Salvia rosmarinus*
Eucalyptol	$C_{10}H_{18}O$	monoterpenoid	insecticide	*Tanacetum vulgare*
Rosmarinic Acid	$C_{18}H_{16}O_8$	ester	antioxidant	*Salvia rosmarinus*

wash the skin as a precaution against infectious air. Ingredients varied, but usually consisted of a large proportion of aromatic leafy herbs such as Rosemary, Rue, Peppermint, Wormwood, Sage, Lavender, Pennyroyal and Marjoram, with the addition of aromatic roots such as Calamus, Campanula or Garlic, and aromatic seeds such as Clove or Nutmeg.

Four Thieves Vinegar.

This formulation is true to the spirit of the originals, using aromatic leaves which are commonly found in the garden. All material used should be freshly harvested.

2 g	Rosemary, leaves and flowers
2 g	Marjoram, leaves and flowers
3 g	Lavender, flowers
3 g	Rue, leaves
5 g	Wormwood, leaves
5 g	Peppermint, leaves

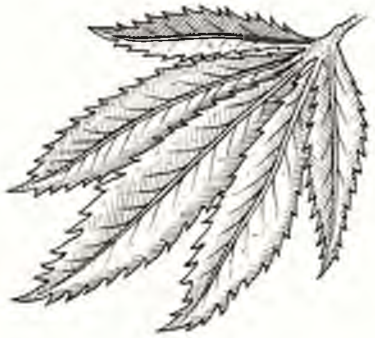
℄ Shred leaves to express their aromatics, then cover with 150 ml white wine vinegar in a sealed vessel and steep for two weeks. Strain and bottle, using it as a wash or a sprinkle. As a variation, one may substitute *Artemisia californica* or Russian Sage (*Perovskia atriplicifolia*) for the Wormwood, yielding a formulation with greater redolence of spice.

CANARY ROSEWOOD

Convolvulus scoparius

Convolvulaceæ (Morning Glory Family)

A SHRUBBY, upright perennial Morning Glory native to the Canary Islands, whose wood is sometimes known as Lignum Rhodium. From the wood an aromatic oil is extracted bearing a distinctive, spicy roselike odor known as Rhodium Oil, which was sometimes sold alone, or used as an adulterant of Attar of Roses. It has been identified by some as the mysterious herb *Aspalathos*, used in the ancient incense Kyphi; whether this is the case or not, the wood produces a pleasant aroma when burned.



CANNABIS

Cannabis sativa, Cannabis indica

Cannabaceæ (Cannabis Family)

A DIOECIOUS annual herb with an erect stem and palmate leaves up to 7 meters high, flowering from June to August. The parts used in medicine and magic are the upper leaves and inflorescences of the female plant, and the oils and resins derived therefrom. When grown as a fiber crop, stalks provide the basis of hemp as used for textiles and rope. In traditional curing, various forms of traumatization are often inflicted on the plant to increase the resin content of the flowers. Such methods include drastic pruning, cracking the trunk or main stem, and covering the entire plant with a loosely woven basket.

Its powers upon the body may be classed as aperitif, digestive, hepatic, antibacterial, expectorant, and exhilarant. In folk medicine, the juice of the leaves has been applied to the scalp to kill lice and as a specific for dandruff, and as a poultice for hemorrhoids. Hashish is a known stypic and has been used to check excessive bleeding following childbirth. In medieval Europe, Cannabis was prescribed for dropsy, bloatings of the gut, and the drawing boils; a decoction of the seeds and root, compounded with Roses and White Lead was used to combat erysipelas. Smoke of the herb was inhaled to remedy headaches and as a specific against melancholy. In India, a paste of the fresh leaves has been used as a folk remedy for certain kinds of tumors.

As an intoxicant, the plant has traditionally been snuffed, as well as smoked, smoldered, or eaten. Egyptian papyri from 1600 BCE refer to Cannabis. In Europe, seeds of Cannabis have been found in ceremonial urns dating from the 5th century BCE, probably in conjunction with funerary and purification rites. Herodotus also notes a curious inebriating rite of a people called the Massagetans, who, due to their proximity to the Scythians, probably employed Cannabis:

> They have also discovered a kind of plant, whose fruit they use when they meet in groups. They light a bonfire, sit around it, throw this fruit on the fire, and sniff the smoke rising from the burning fruit they have thrown onto the fire. The fruit is the equivalent there to wine in Greece: they get intoxicated from the smoke, then they thrown more fruit onto the fire, and get even more intoxicated, until they eventually stand up and dance, and burst into song.

The temple of Shiva in Urgum, a small region in the central Himalyays, is surrounded by fields of Cannabis, sacred to that god.

Its occult properties are used to summon and entreat, for inspiration, for funeral rites, and as an ecstatic and aphrodisiac. The use of Cannabis and Ginseng by necromancers was reported by a Taoist priest writing in 500 BC, who said the herbs were used "to set forward time and reveal future events."

One medieval love-spell employed the seed, ground to a powder, in conjunction with a rite of purification. While the sorcerer focused his attention on the beloved, a pinch of the powder was cast to the Four Winds, beginning in the East and moving in a widdershins direction. This was followed by offering some of the herb as a burnt incense, while continuing to concentrate on the one desired. In Mexican folk magic, the flowers have been valued as the basis of a love-philter, extracted into mezcal.

The Spirit-Retinue of Cannabis

Ebullience, Delectation, Tactility, Nebulosity, Lethargy, Vacillation, Release, Grandiloquence, Hilarity, Bemusement, Promiscuous Hunger, Hyperextended Metaphors, and Sensorial Accession.

For the disciplined artist, it may serve as a goad to inspiration or creativity, being cardinal in power and useful for aspects of composition, structure, and organization. These qualities are especially potententiated through the act of ritual meditation. The amounts so utilized often lie far below dosages usually taken for social revelry or therapeutic strength. For the undisciplined mind, these same qualities will result in the exact opposite of creativity: blockage, procrastination, and obsession on irrelevant minutiae, tending to paranoia.

Swifter and stranger grow
The visions: now a mighty city looms,
Hewn from a hill of purest cinnabar
To domes and turrets like a sunrise thronged
With tier on tier of captive moons, half-drowned
In shifting erubescence. But whose hands
Were sculptors of its doors, and columns wrought
To semblance of prodigious blooms of old,
No eremite hath lingered there to say,
And no man comes to learn: for long ago
A prophet came, warning its timid king
Against the plague of lichens that had crept
Across subverted empires, and the sand
Of wastes that cyclopean mountains ward...

CLARK ASHTON SMITH
The Hashish Eater

The plant lends itself well to consumption through a variety of preparations. As the plant's medicinal and euphoric principles are resinous in character, alcohol excels as a solvent for their extraction, thus varied wines and cordials effectively magnify its inebriating force. A traditional hashish conserve is prepared in Morocco, being prepared from a mixture of the powdered resin and leaves, butter, honey and opium. It is readily absorbed by the skin, and this property makes it ideal for magical unguents.

Cannabis Infused Oil.

The strength, simplicity, and resinous power of the plant can be understood through simple lipidic extraction, in the form of a folk remedy. It may also be used for anointing in rituals of initiation, divination and consecration.

10 g dried Cannabis inflorescence, virtuous
325 ml Extra Vigin Olive Oil

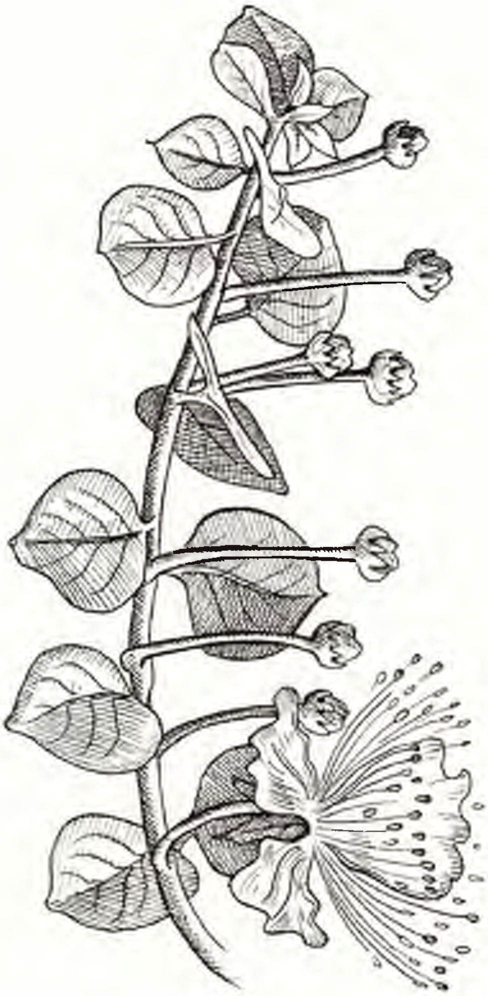
❡ Inter the plant material and oil into a clean vessel, seal and steep 2 weeks in a dark place, shaking daily. When two weeks have passed, strain out the plant material and reserve the infused oil in container. As a topical, its strength is proven, to be used in the amount of 2–5 ml. Greater amounts will increase its intoxicating aspects.

CORRESPONDENCES
Powers: Divination, Love, Inspiration, Intoxication, Funerary.
Planets: Venus and Saturn.
Deific Forms: Shiva.
Body Part: Sensorium Entire.
Virtue: Exhilaration.
Therapeutic: Connectivity.
Affliction: Mental Atrophy.
Eponymous Compounds: Tetrahydrocannabinol—$C_{21}H_{30}O_2$.
Emblem: A trio of masked, leaf-clad dancers, wreathed in smoke.

CAPER

Capparis spinosa, Capparis spp.
Capparidaceæ (Caper Family)

THE genus *Capparis* contains about 250 species of shrubs, small trees, and lianas, and is distributed in Eurasia, Africa, and the Near East. Many are spine-bearing and possess valued medicinal and magical characteristics. Its best-known species *Capparis spinosa* is a sprawling evergreen shrub to 1 meter in height, with pale green or sometimes glaucous ovate leaves; its branches are somewhat pliable, thus it may assume a form liminal betwixt shrub and vine. The attractive white flowers are mildly fragrant, and the many-seeded fruits are edible. Unopened buds, sun-dried and pickled in brine and vinegar, provide the culinary capers of commerce. Culturally, the plant can be adapted to growth in captivity, but sun, heat and well-drained soils are essential. As it has been known to thrive in ruins, it is an especially attractive addition to rock gardens.



Caper has an ancient association with humans. Together with flowers and leaves of *Cannabis sativa*, extremely well-preserved seeds of *Capparis spinosa* were discovered in the Yanghai Tombs, in Turpan District, Xinjiang. As a grave-good dating to 800 BCE, archaeologists surmise medicinal use of the seeds based on context.

Its medicinal uses are diverse. The pickled bud serves as a restorative esculent, both in culinary tradition and in medicine. As a therapeutic, it is a bitter aperient, with tincture compounded from the root bark. Across North Africa, the leaves are valued in traditional medicine as an anodyne, in particular, against rheumatism. The Bedouin traditionally use the thorns of C. *cartilaginea* to remove infestations of leeches from the throat, which cause bleeding and sometimes strangulation. A bath using infusions of the same plant, together with mint, are used to treat infertility in women. Spectroscopic analysis has revealed the presence of three novel eponymous compounds, capparisine A, capparisine B, and capparisine.

The root bark enjoyed ancient esteem as a specific against poisons, particularly snakebite and scorpion stings. The poisonous root of a native South African species known as the Woolly Caper Bush (C. *tomentosa*) is used by the Zulu for curing madness and snakebite, and it is also valued as a potent love-charm and an arrow-poison. A South American species, C. *crotonoides*, is valued as a specific against 'bad air': the leaves are boiled and the liquid used as a bath, or applied to the skin. In Rajasthan, the species known as Kair (C. *decidua*) is considered holy and associated with graves and charnel-grounds. Traditional protective magic of Ethiopia esteems the leaves, which are burnt or smoldered to overcome the malignant power of the Evil Eye.

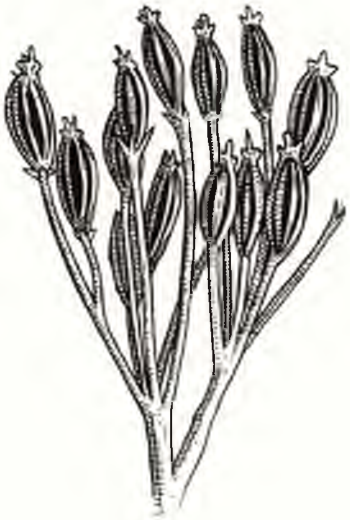
THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF CAPER

Inducement, Appentency, Melioration, Regeneration, Inheritance, Constancy, Hardihood, Ataraxia, Eremitic Wisdom, Sovereign Bitterness, Blessed Antidote, Redoubled Strength, and Ruthless Preservation.

CARAWAY

Carum carvi
Apiaceæ (Dill Family)

CARAWAY is a biennial herb growing to 0.5 meter in height, bearing white or pink umbels, known chiefly as a savory aromatic, the spice being the fragrant seeds, often used for baking, preparing meats, and for the making of certain alcoholic liqueurs. Native to Europe, Asia and North Africa, the plant is treasured in cultivation and essential as a food source. The whole of the plant including the leaves and the root, is edible; the seeds lend their distinctive essence to Rye bread.



Its action upon the human physium is carminative, digestive, emmenagogue, and galactagogue. The crushed seeds, boiled in water, are calmative of rumbling or gaseous guts, or in unfortunate cases where the bowels are besieged by cramping. As a medicine it has also been used for the reduction of hemorrhoids.

In magical usage, its esoteric properties are Protection from Disease, Prevention of Theft, and Allure for the attraction of paramours, sometimes in the form of a philter. Caraway's planetary correspondence falls under the dual emanation of Mercury and of Saturn.

Caraway potions were used in love magic, having the especial virtue of addressing fickleness in lovers. The seeds have likewise featured prominently in classic love-potion formulae to ensure fidelity. A simple charm for preventing theft involves secreting some Caraway seeds into the object you wish to guard.

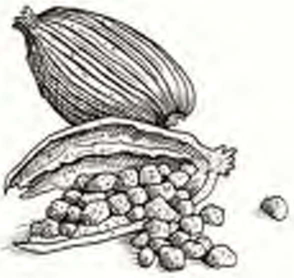
CARDAMOM

Elettaria cardamomum
Zingiberaceæ (Ginger Family)

THIS warming, stimulant herb native to India and Indochina appears much in the manner of a reed, being perennial and tropical, with long, downy, lanceolate leaves and yellow or white flowers veined with purple. When touched, the entire plant proffers an agreeable, spicy odor. The seed, which is of two types—green and black—and its essential oil are the portions used. Near-ripe fruits produce an essential oil that is employed in perfumery and in liqueurs. It is used widely in Indian cuisine, and the Bedouin prize the seeds for flavoring their coffee.

Cardamom's action upon the human body is similar to Ginger in many respects; it is stimulant, tonic, carminative, antiseptic, aphrodisiac, digestive, sialagogue, diuretic, and stomachic. The herb has been standard to Chinese medicine and Ayurveda for 3,000 years, and it was known in ancient Greek medicine, as Hippocrates prescribed Cardamon as a theriac against various animal venoms. Its chemical particulars include the aromatic compounds cineol, limonene, linalol, zingiberine, pinene, sabinine, and terpinyl acetate.

Its chemical and spiritual virtues are aligned with Mars, being heat-producing, aggressive and arousing; elementally Cardamom is aligned with both Fire and Earth. As expressed in magical operations, its occult properties are Attraction, Love, Allure, Peace, and Glamours. In Indian, Middle Eastern and North African plant traditions, the seeds are ground and mixed with honey for use as an aphrodisiac.



The Spirit-Retinue of Cardamom

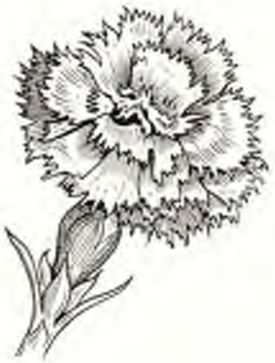
Efflorescence, Zest, Enlivenment, Persuasion, Panache, Tinglings, Roilings, Tumults, Kindlings, Sapidities, Upward Ascension, Effulgent Spice, and Perfumed Warmth.

CARNATION

Dianthus caryophyllus

Caryophyllaceæ (Pink Family)

OF the scents that haunt the physic garden, few are as beguiling and monadic as the Carnation. Like the Violet, its aromatic allure is singular and must be approached and understood as a singular emanation, even though its smell arises from a complex weaving of organic compounds. Prized in cultivation, the plant possesses a prostrate growth habit, with green to glaucous foliage, and is commonly seen at the margins of the garden, along stone borders, or favoring ruinous stone walls. Its flowers assume the form of a cyme, their color range including white, pink, plum, and red. In older lexica of plant knowledge, it was known as Pink, Gillyflower, and Sops-In-Wine.



Diverse species of *Dianthus* are scattered across the northern hemisphere, mostly concentrated in Europe and Asia. In addition to *D. caryophyllus*, several are fragrant, such as the Cheddar Pink (*Dianthus gratianopolitanus*), native to Somerset. Easily grown in the garden, it thrives in neutral to slightly alkaline soil, an echo of certain wild populations' preference for dwelling in chalky or limestone soils. Older plants should be divided, cut back, and fertilized to maintain vigor, and stock should be regularly augmented with new plantings. The generic name *Dianthus* means 'Flower of the Gods,' and as a botanical emblem it is rich in funerary associations as well as those of love and admiration.

A preponderance of modern cultivars have been bred for floral display, and in the process lost much of their beguiling fragrance, but Carnation has traditionally been valued as an aromatic, and used to flavor wines and meads. Its scent and flavor are readily imparted into alcohol, but the fragrance may also be extracted in a more concentrated form as Carnation Absolute, possessing strong floral characteristics of sweetness, warmth, and spice. Though expensive, those who have been bewitched its aromatic glamor will easily justify the price. Significant naturally occurring aromatic compounds include eugenol, elemol, limonene, phellandrene and a complex of pinenes.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF CARNATION

Buoyancy, Decorum, Adroitness, Enhancement, Sobriety, Consolidation, Proposition, Consideration, Acceptance, Nuance, Evanescent Memory, Dark Nostalgias, and Sarcophagal Majesty.

Among herbalists its spiritual quintessence was often ascribed the dominion of Mercury. Given the propensity of its aroma for stimulation of the mind, this correlation is sound. Indeed, its fragrance has been described as 'heady' and to be enveloped within it is to know the qualities of inspiration, ecstasy, allure and poetry as one. Yet the fragrance of the Carnation, as well as its magical and religious uses, also readily align with Venus and Saturn. Interestingly, the grimoire *Almadel* specifies that the spirit-guardians of the South, when conjured, appear as having the form of '...a young child clothed in rose colored satin with a ringlet of gillyflowers on his head. His face looks toward heaven and shines as the Sun, upon departure he leaves an enduring perfume.' The whole plant, the flower, and its fragrance are aligned with amorous magic and are frequent ingredients in erotic spells, as well as restoration of the soul after a person has been disturbed in affairs of the heart.

A traditional Greek charm of exorcism uses a smudge of burning petals of Carnation, fanned over the possessed person's body, to drive away noxious spirits. In at least one instance, documented in 1617 in the South of France, Carnation was used to call up demons who infested a young woman, as documented in Emanuel LeRoy Ladurie's seminal French witchcraft study *Jasmin's Witch*. In Morocco, a ritual mixture of saffron and water with pounded roses and pinks was traditionally used in Berber funerary devotions for smearing the headstones of graves.

A Carnation Cordial.

¶ Fill a clean steeping vessel with fresh Carnation flowers, using the sweeter and more fragrant varieties such as clove pink 'Grenadin.' The blossoms are then covered in Spirits of Wine, or neutral spirit, and steeped for one week. The liquid is strained and reserved, and a new quantity of fresh flowers is added, so that the liquid covers all. This process is repeated two or three more times, until the elixir assumes a deep ruby color. This mixture is then strained into a clean jar and bottled with sugar to sweeten, generally at a ratio of one quarter to one half the volume of liquid, depending on preference.

CASCARILLA

Croton eleuteria

Euphorbiaceæ (Spurge Family)

A SMALL tree found in the Bahama Islands and elsewhere in the Caribbean, attaining a maximum height of 7 meters. The plant has alternate, ovate-lanceolate leaves, averaging 5 cm. long and a lucent bronze-green appearance. Its flowers are fragrant and white; the aromatic bark is pale golden-brown. The dried bark and its essential oil are the parts used. Cascarilla is a frequent aromatic ingredient in perfumes, beauty products, and liqueurs. The bark renders a black dye of excellent quality. It is not to be confused with the powdered eggshell (also called 'cascarilla'), also of magico-religious commerce.

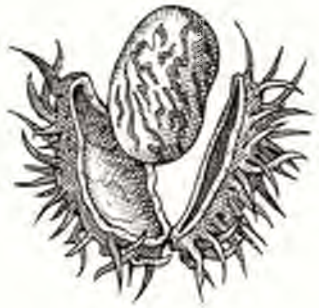
Its therapeutic properties are astringent, antimicrobial, antiseptic, carminative, expectorant, and bitter tonic. Cascarilla can be utilized to combat dyspeptic complaints, diarrhea and mild fevers. A proven invigorator of the mucous membranes, it is an ally to those suffering chronic bronchitis. An infusion of the leaves can be drunk as a serviceable digestive. The bark renders tannin, cascarillin, albumen, volatile oil, gum, wax, resin, starch, pectic acid potassium chloride, salts of calcium, and lignin. The essential oil contains sesquiterpenes, cascarillic acid, palmitic and stearic acids, eugenol, cymene, and betaine, among other constituents.

Cascarilla is a plant of Mercury; its spiritual properties are Illumination, Summoning, Consecration, and Harmony. The vapors which arise when the bark is smoldered are of a splendid odor; smelling sweet and lightly of musk. As such, it may be used in incenses. In Southeast Asia, the related species *Croton tiglia* was burned as a suffumigant to induce illumination.

'Four Ways' Incense.

¶ An incense to be burned for the guardian spirits of the crossroads. Combine all into an amalgamated powder and burn as desired on a charcoal.

Cascarilla bark	15 parts
Sumbul	5 parts
Sandalwood powder	5 parts
Pericon, aerial portions	5 parts
Daemonorops draco powder	2 parts



CASTOR

Ricinus communis

Euphorbiaceæ (Spurge Family)

A SHRUB of cosmopolitan distribution, reaching a maximum height of 12 meters, having lobed palmate leaves and minute red flowers. Native to India, it is widely cultivated for its oil, which is a supreme lubricant and illuminant; it is also considered a noxious weed in many parts of the world. The spiny fruit is a three-seeded capsule, the seeds or 'beans' containing a triglyceride-rich oil useful in medicine as a stimulant and cathartic, as well as in soaps and as a lubricant for internal combustion engines. The seeds are dispersed by the mechanism of a barbed, explosive fruits. The species has a vast array of varieties and morphological diversities, a testament to its ancient and cultivated use; seeds have been found in ancient Egyptian tombs and the *Ebers Papyrus* mentions the plant at length. Oil from the seeds was known in antiquity as Oleum Cicinum; it was used by the ancient Egyptians for burning in lamps and torches, and for compounding sacred unguents. It has also been used by midwives, in small amounts, to induce labor.

The main phytotoxin is ricin, a toxic protein concentrated mostly in the seeds, it is present in the oil cake after the oil has been extracted from the seed. Ricin disrupts metabolic processes in the body such as protein synthesis; it is one of the deadliest venoms of the vegetal realm. Action of the poison is slow and insidious; signs of Castor posisoning include cold sweats, vomiting, diarrhea, cyanosis, thirst, and burning sensations in the mouth and face.

> When the woman does not want to conceive again, she must place in the afterbirth as many castor seeds...or grains of barley as she desires to have years of sterility.
>
> *Thesaurus Pauperum*, 1497

Aside from its strength in poisoning and purging, the especial magical powers of Castor are Exorcism, Warfare, and Binding. Its palmate leaves, sympathetic with the form of the human hand, are often used as subduers of evil spirits, as in India. In Rajasthan, the roots are used as amulets to ward off fascination. As its métier is confrontation and the active dispersion of evil, it is strongly aligned with the planet Mars, divine sword-wielder and disemboweller. Castor was long held to protect the home, especially when its leaves were hung there, evoking the Hand that halts the Devil. Affirming this power, it was known by the vulgar name Palma Christi Bean. In northern India, it is known as Daldakul, and the seeds and inflorescence are also used to disrupt demonic infestation.

In Haiti, Castor Oil is used by Vodun *houngans* and *bokors* to cast out troublesome spirits in children, as well as intestinal worms. One spell for the absorption of *maleficia* utilizes a Castor bean sealed in a bottle with wax. The seed absorbs evil miasma for the space of one month, at which time it is discarded, and replaced with a fresh bean.

The Spirit-Retinue of Castor

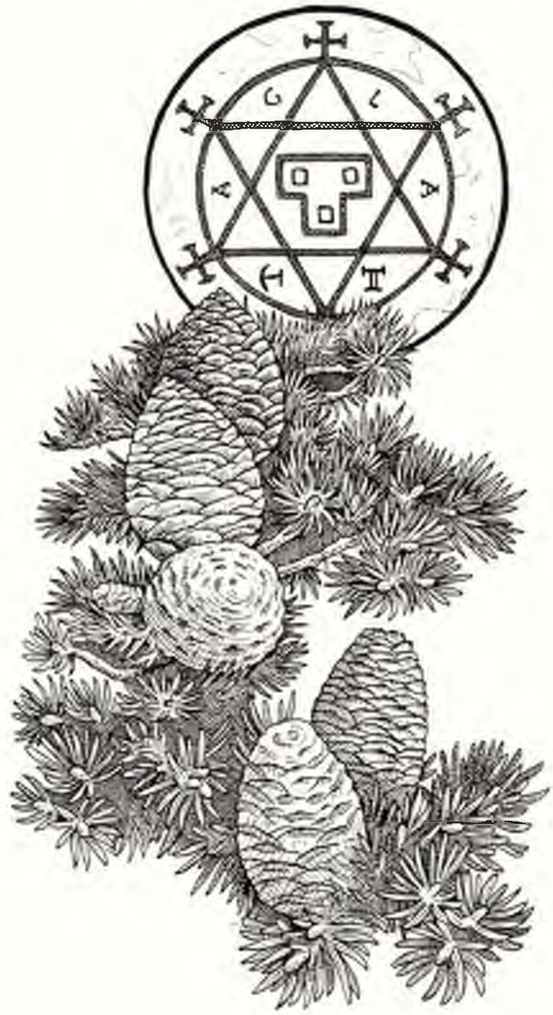
Engagement, Dexterity, Vigor, Prowess, Restriction, Resistance, Flammability, Incineration, Eradication, Massacre, Search and Seizure, Wrathful Expungement, and Swift Passage.

CEDAR

Cedrus spp.

Pinaceæ (Pine Family)

THE Cedar is the living balsam of the ancient gods, a colossus of virid, earthly power. To inhale its scent is to arouse the body, to partake of the perfumes of the afterlife, and of the ongoing interconnectivity between death and incarnation.



The botanical genus *Cedrus*, or the True Cedars, consists of 3 species of evergreen conifers of varying heights, with strongly fragrant wood: Cedar of Lebanon (*Cedrus libani*); Deodar Cedar (*Cedrus deodora*) and Atlas Cedar (*Cedrus atlantica*). The Cedar tree has true needles, like a Pine. *C. deodara* is the most reverred tree in the Western Himalayas, growing from an altitude of 4,000 to 10,000 feet. Its scent is woody, balsamic, sweet, and mildly redolent of musk.

A number of modern writers on magical herbalism have erroneously classified other genera of conifer trees as Cedar, notably species of Arbor Vitae (*Thuja* spp.); *Libocedrus* (Incense Cedar), and Juniper (*Juniperus* spp.) Though these trees bear some similarities to Cedar in medicinal action, they are morphologically, as well as genetically, unrelated. Taxonomically, they are of the Cypress Family (Cupressaceæ), whereas Cedar is of the Pine family (Pinaceæ). In the often-deceptive world of occult commerce, the word 'Cedarwood' frequently refers to wood and oil derived from *Juniperus*.

Cedar emanates and resonates the planetary attributes of the Sun, but it also possesses Venusian, Martial and Jupiterian affinities, any of which may be amplified based on the nature of the magical practice and the plant materials with which it is combined. The portions of the tree most used in magical operations are the needles, fragrant heartwood, resin and its essential oil derivative. The cones of some trees may also produce resin exudate on their surfaces, which may be gently scraped.

> *When the girl sits,*
> *she is a grove of apple trees rich of fruits,*
> *When she lies down,*
> *...she is a shadow-spreading cedar branch.*
> SUMERIAN LOVE CHARM

When used in magical operations, Cedar serves as a ward against noxious spirits. Its additional powers are Exorcism, Healing, Curse Lifting, and Protection from both nightmares and maleficia. Like Juniper, Cedar branches have been smoldered and inhaled to produce a state of magical trance. Oil of Atlas Cedar, as well that of as its two sisters, may be used for operations of Allure, as well as love charms. Cedar is used as a Tibetan temple incense, and also as an ingredient in the high magic of the European grimoires. Within the famous *Ars Almadel* may be found an incense for Mars, compounded of Cedar and Sandalwood.

In India, Cedar trees are indwelt by beneficent spirits and deities who are worshipped to drive away malefic entities. Branches of Cedar are burned to keep demons at bay, and the smoke is inhaled by divinely inspired prophets. The specific name *deodara* is a Hindi contraction of the Sanskrit Deva-Daru, meaning 'Godly Wood'.

As in India, the reputation of the Cedar for frustrating demons was also known in ancient Mesopotamia; the meddling spirits of ancient Chaldea known as the *maskims* were driven away with Cedar. Cedar was one of several holy woods burned by the ancient Sumerians to dispel the evil of lunar eclipses. Excessive harvest of Cedar of Lebanon (*Cedrus libani*) in the building of Solomon's Temple and the Hanging Gardens of Babylon nearly succeded in driving the tree into extinction.

Despite its power to vanquish malevolent spirits, in several traditions the Cedar is aligned with them. Huwawa, a Babylonian demon, was a frightful spirit who guarded the ancient forests of Cedars. His beard was composed of human entrails, his breath stunk of death and excrement; his was the power of putrefaction. In ancient Japanese ophidian traditions, both the Cedar and the Cypress are associated with the body of Yamatanoorchi, the monstrous eight-headed serpent. For the practitioner of occult herbalism, these resonances with the demonic should be kept in mind when walking among wild Cedar forest, and indeed when approaching any singular tree.

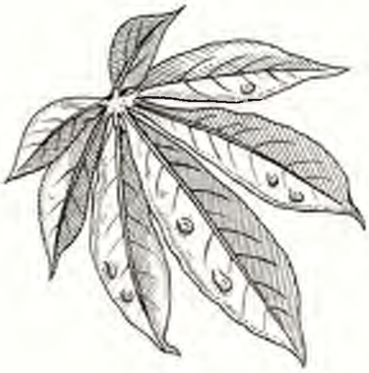
The Spirit-Retinue of Cedar

Divinity, Majesty, Sublimity, Surety, Invulnerability, Appeal, Constancy, Vitality, Attraction, Pre-eminence, Bright Effusion, Divine Fragrance, and Inviolable Sanctuary.

Cedar has long been known as a preserver, and a protector against the forces of mortal decay. According to Herodotus, its oil was injected into the abdomens and fundaments of Egyptian corpses during the mummification process; this practice was used for the second-best method of mummification, and its purpose was to dissolve the intestines so they might later be drawn out. According to the accounts of the Greek historian Posidonius, some Celtic warriors preserved the most prized heads of their enemies with Oil of Cedar, keeping the grisly trophies in wooden chests. In more recent times, these powers serve the needs of domestic life: the tradition of the Cedar Chest safely stores winter clothes, its strong scent repelling moths.

Aside from the resin and oil, the best aromatic fraction lending itself to immediate use is the wood, whose shavings when smoldered constitute a perfect natural incense, needful of no human artifice. The best wood for this purpose will come from branches in excess of 2 cm in diameter, which have had sufficient time to develop heartwood. For sustainable harvest, one can obtain it without killing the tree, from arborists or gardeners during tree maintenance on larger individuals.

The fragrant wood is appreciated by diverse religions and magical practitioners for its power as a fetish: European Christians used the wood for the beads of their rosaries, and the wood may be carved into statues and idols. As a rustic talisman for protection in sleep, fresh-cut boughs may be hung over the bed as a magical dreaming-ally and a protector against uninvited nocturnal spirits.



CEIBA

Ceiba pentandra

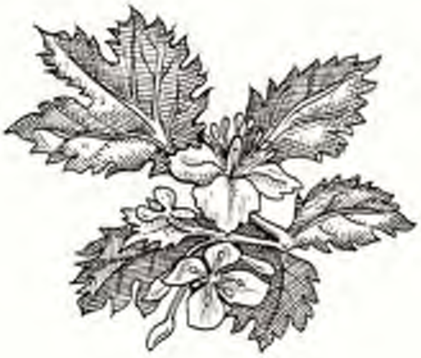
Bombacaceæ (Bombax Family)

THE Kapok, which is sometimes referred to generically as the Ceiba, is a tall tree native to the tropical Americas, growing to 70 meters in height, with palmate leaves and spreading roots, its trunk either smooth or covered with large conical spines. One of the largest trees in the world, the bark of the venerated rainforest Ceibas is used as a traditional aphrodisiac, and its wood is sometimes carved into fetish items. In Mexico, the tree was sacred to the Aztecs and aligned with Yax Imixche, their world-tree. It was associated with blood and heredity, and also offered strong powers of protection.

Its powers in magic are Abundance and Fertility, as well as Madness and initiatic power. The portions most often used in magic and sorcery are the leaves and bark.

The Ceiba is central to the religious traditions of the African diaspora in the Americas; it is linked with the left-hand path of *Palo Mayombe*. The initiation of a Mayombero involves sleeping beneath a Ceiba for seven nights. Numerous magical baths employing potent herbs—among them Ceiba—are taken. At the base of the tree, the spirits of the dead, or the genius of the Ceiba itself, may be invoked as witnesses to the rite. The initiation culminates with a garland of the tree's leaves being placed on the initiate's forehead; these attract the spirits of the Dead, who take possession of the new Mayombero. Because the Ceiba is known to command the magical powers of insanity, the plant is also employed by folk doctors to treat ailments of the head.

In the Yucatan, the old trunks of the Ceiba trees are thought to be inhabited by the gnomelike spirit *X-tabai*. In some South American magical traditions, the mightiest plant spirit is that of the Lupuna Tree, a type of Ceiba; its presiding spirit is a malign, demonic sorcerer who smokes a pipe.



CELANDINE, GREATER

Chelidonium majus

Papaveraceæ (Poppy Family)

THE genus *Chelidonium* contains only one species, that being *majus*, indicating the Greater Celandine, as opposed to the Lesser Celandine, which belongs to the separate botanical family Ranunculaceæ, the buttercups. It is perennial herb ranging in height from 0.5 to 1 meter, having pronounced, downy stems; a ruddy-brown rhizome, and a yellow, nine-petaled, Poppy-like flower visible from spring to autumn. It thrives in woods, wastelands, by walls, fences, and rural hovels. All parts of the plant—including the root—have lactiferous ducts which spill an acrid, alkaloid-rich yellow latex when the plant in bruised or broken. Celandine is distributed through all of Europe, from the Mediterranean through Scandinavia, moving eastward toward Asia. Its complex of magical and medicinal powers is aligned with the planetary governances of the Sun and Jupiter. In Alchemy, *Chelidony* was also a secret name for gold.

Known by such names as Chelidonia, Sallendine, and Swallow Wort, from the most distant times it has been used to treat a spectrum of bodily dysfunctions, gaining in its fame what may be described as a pharmacological cultus: in this it conforms in its exalted state to other members of the Poppy family. Celandine's greatest virtue is for topical use externally, chiefly for eliminating corns, piles, ringworm, and warts. The herb has a mild action upon the liver, overcoming biliary catarrh and jaundice; its healing virtues can, however, in quantity, manifest as poison.

A tincture compounded from varied parts of the plant is the preferred route of preparation. Celandine's chemical particulars include allocryptopine, berberine, chelamine, chelerythrine, chelidonine, coptisine, magnoflorine, protopine, sanguinarine, sparteine, and stylopine. Concentration of these principles is greatest in the root, where it occurs in concentrations up to 2 per cent. The plant extract has been known in some cases to cause death due to heart failure.

For magical operations, the dried leaves or fresh flowers are used, especially as a Solar talisman. *The Secrets of Albertus Magnus* documents the use of 'this herb with the heart of a Mole' as a talisman for overcoming one's enemies. Celandine gathered on the morning of St. Peters day was used in charms against imprisonment. Root of Celandine was also, at various times, substituted for that of Mandrake when a carved fetish was required.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Protection, Triumph, Warfare, Revealing.
Planets: The Sun.
Element: Fire.
Star: Regulus (α Leonis).
Body Part: Skin, liver.
Medicine: Antineoplastic.
Pathology: Contact Dermatitis.
Chemical Virtues: Sanguinarine.
Eponymous Compunds: Chelidonine—$C_{20}H_{19}NO_5$.
Emblem: A knight in golden armor, standing in a meadow, bearing a mortal and pestle.

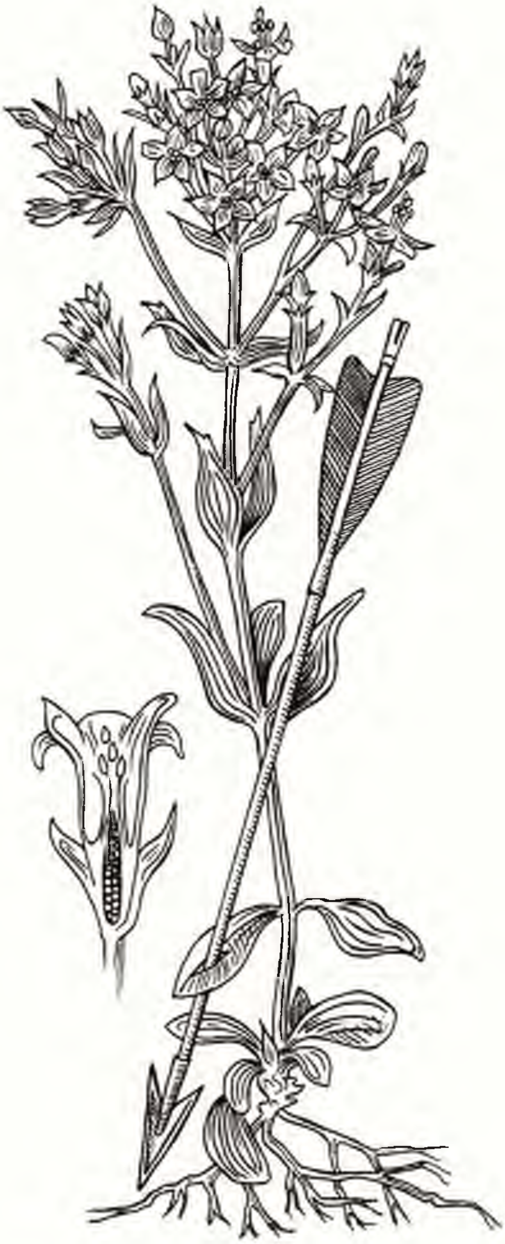
CENTAURY

Centaurium erythtraea

Gentianaceæ (Gentian Family)

A SHRUBBY annual or biennial herb with bitter leaves bearing pink, star-shaped flowers, preferring, chalky soil, moist meadows, and sunny wooded areas. Stems and flowers are collected when the plant is in flower from July through

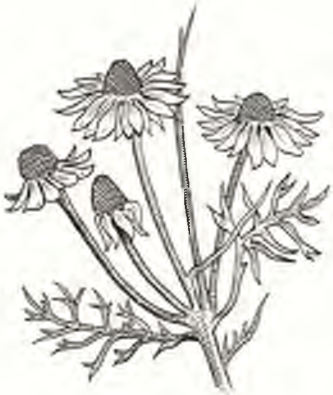
September; it is then hung in bundles to dry, and wrapped in heavy paper. The plant has accreted a great variety of folk names, among them Isiphilon, Bloodwort, Christs' Ladder, Earth-Gall, and Fel Terrae. The herb's planetary patrons are the Sun, Jupiter, and Saturn.



> Witches say that this herb hath a marvellous virtue, for if it be joined with the blood of a female Lapwing, or Black Plover, and be put with oil in a lamp, all they that encompass it about shall believe themselves to be witches, so that one shall believe of another that his head is in heaven and his feet in the earth. And if the aforesaid thing be put in the fire when the stars shine it shall appear that the stars run one against another, and fight.
>
> *Book of the Secret of Albertus Magnus*

Its usage in magical operations includes Exorcism, Healing and the creation of illusions. Centaury strewn on the hearth was an old charm against thunderstorms. Wearing a wreath of the herb to a crossroad on Walpurgisnacht (the night of April 30) allowed one to behold witches in flight to the Sabbat.

It was valued in medicine as a hepatic and antiseptic. In occult literature, its pressed juice, or fluidic essence concentrated as a liquor, was regarded as a destroyer of serpents. In ancient times Centaury was esteemed as a *theriac*, a potent antidote to all poisons. The plant yields a valuable greenish-yellow dye, and it has also been used as a folk cosmetic to lighten brown hair, as well as freckles.



CHAMOMILE

German: *Matricaria chamomilla*

Roman: *Chamaemelum nobile*

Asteraceæ (Sunflower Family)

CHAMOMILE is a low-growing herb with small yellow composite blossoms, thriving under cultivation and in the wild. The fresh or dried blossoms are the portions employed, though the leaves also contain some aromatic virtue. As a savior of the skin, the flower is used externally in cases of inflammation and irritation, in the form of poultices, compresses, and unguents. A friend of the digestive corridors, it is also employed against wretched bodily gasses, diarrhea, and nervous and acute gastrointestinal conditions. The plant has also been shown to restrain and neutralize bacterial posions; a strong infusion may be used as an external wash on the skin for rectification of associated maladies. The tea or tincture has been promoted as a remedy for sleeplessness, and in some areas, *M. reciutita* is brewed as a tea to ease hangovers. *Chamaemelum nobile* is the source of the remarkable blue anti-inflammatory compound chamazulene ($C_{14}H_{16}$).

In planetary herbalism, Chamomile is aligned with the Sun. Its powers in magical operations are Love, Success in Gambling, Vigor, and Ease. Its flowers can be added to incenses and philters for oracular and meditative work.

Planted in abundance near to the bedroom window, will offer up delicious odors in the night hours and increase the frequency and prophetic virtues of dreams. Dried flowers may be used to this effect, though less pronounced in action than the live or fresh plant. In England, the Chamomile has enjoyed folk usage in Norfolk for preventing nightmares.

A strong infusion of the golden blossoms makes an excellent gambling potion for washing the hands prior to throwing dice or cards. Topical applications of the infusion of *Matricaria chamomilla* are used in Peruvian magical traditions to promote felicity and good relations between people, as well as a cure for lovesickness.

CHASTE TREE

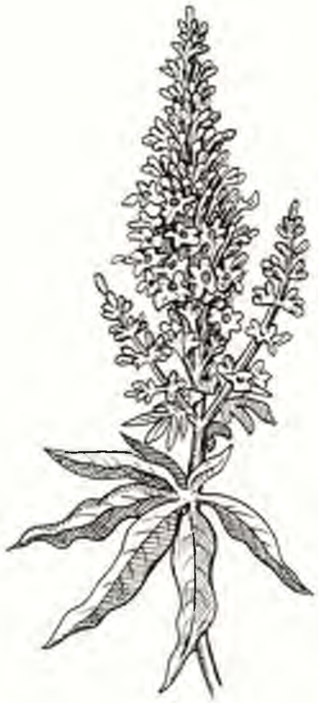
Vitex agnus-castus

Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

MONK'S Pepper or Chaste Tree is a perennial deciduous shrub or tree reaching 7 meters in height, and native to the lands of the Mediterranean. It has palmate, compound dissected leaves which yield a stimulating aroma, and fragrant purple flowers. Formerly classed with the Verbenaceæ (Verbena family), the genus *Vitex* contains over 200 accepted species. An indigenous North American species, the pale purple-flowered Uvaluma (*Vitex mollis*) is native to the Sonora Desert, and bears an edible fruit.

In folk medicine, both aphrodisiac and anaphrodisiac qualities are attributed to the leaves and seeds, and it has accrued considerable medicinal lore as a balancer of hormones. Traditional use of Nisinda (*Vitex negundo*) as an abortifactient is attested in India, and the plant is a frequent ingredient in compound preparations for hastening menstruation or inducing abortion.

> There is a kind of tree named Vitex, during the feasts of the goddess Ceres which were named the Thesmorphia...the dames of Athens...made their pallets and beds with the leaves thereof to cool the heat of lust, and keep themselves chaste for the time.
>
> PLINY



Among the seven classical planets, its powers are allied with Venus and the Moon. It is typically associated with charms and rituals of Chastity, Binding, Exorcism, and Protection from Fascination. Dioscorides reported the power of the tree to keep wolves away by holding its portions in the hand, perhaps a mystical reference to its powers of assuaging lust.

The Candomblé abô, or sacred baths, will sometimes utilize Chaste Berry, it is also popular as a magical incense. In Greece, the twigs are used to weave small baskets, and to fortify beehives; branches were also used to make pilgrims' staffs.

Its magical function may be likened to that of an urn or vessel meant to contain and calibrate the Sexual Body, this extends to the energetic continuum of its suppression, but also its liberation or expansion. The seeds, leaves, and twigs are thus well used for talismans of sexual empowerment, in whatsoever form.

The Spirit-Retinue of the Chaste Tree

Regulation, Tessellation, Apportionment, Continence,
Calculation, Cloistering, Demarcation, Ascesis,
Outpourings, Floodwaters, High Tides,
Carnal Reckoning, and
Resurgent Flesh.

CHERRY

Prunus avium and *Prunus cerasus*
Rosaceæ (Rose Family)

A DECIDUOUS, fruit-producing tree with maroon bark, pink blossoms, simple leaves, and an edible red drupe, for which it has been cultivated since ancient times. *P. avium* is the Sweet Cherry, and grows from 15–30 meters in height, while the Sour Cherry (*P. cerasus*) is smaller, growing from 5–10 meters. Wild exemplars of both species evolved in Europe and Asia, with their probable cradle of botanical origin in Turkey. The genus *Prunus*, (which includes plums, peaches and almonds) contains other trees regarded as 'wild' or 'bird' cherry types. For example, Mahaleb, or the St. Lucie Cherry (*P. mahaleb*), which is used in the Mediterranean as a spice and in some occult formulæ.

The parts used are the blossom, fruit and wood. The bark is useful in medicine and as a bittering agent. Certain trees exhibit gummosis, an affliction by which a clear or amber gum is exuded from the bark; this may be used in incense, or for confections. The hard, dense wood is prized for furniture, wood turning, cabinet making, and for smoking-pipes, and its strong branches can grow very straight.

It is valued in folk medicine as an antispasmodic, antitussive, and sedative. Wild Cherry bark is a powerful antiseptic, also useful of great virtue for diarrhea and worms. The fruit is valued as a restorative and tonic, made into a syrup, or bruised and decocted. The presence of anthocyanins and kindred botanical compounds have lent biochemical support to Cherry's ancient usage as a tonic, and its attribuited powers of disease prevention.

The tree is also a source of mild toxins; the fresh or dried leaves are relatively harmless, but wilted leaves on freshly cut branches contain prunasin, a cyanogenic glycoside formed by partial hydrolysis of amygdalin. This renders hydrocyanic (Prussic) acid, which can cause untold damage to the heart and brain. Livestock feeding on large amounts of these leaves will develop convulsions and staggering, followed by death.

Cherry is aligned with the planetary-deific emanation of Venus; in magical operations, it is used for Allure, Bewitchment, and for strengthening will. Its fruit is used in philters, and its wood for spirit-summoning wands or rods, and for carving effigies. Wild Cherry wood is also employed as a fumigant by Greek peasants to drive off the *Kallikantzaroi*, the rude, theriomorphic beings of the underworld known to walk the earth during the Twelve Nights.

The Spirit-Retinue of Cherry

Convocation, Flocculation, Concentration, Enliven-
ment, Opportunism, Proposition, Largesse,
Spiritual Ferment, Rapt Temptation,
Illicit Beauty, Lascivious Flirt-
ation, Embittered Sweetness,
and Concealed Poison.

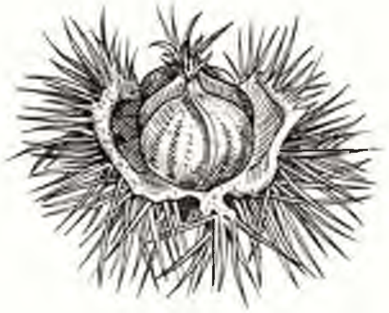
Russian magic used a number of kinds of enchanted rods, especially for divining subterranean treasures, and certain woods were thought to have close affinities with certain metals. Wands of cherry were especially esteemed for their powers of locating copper and copper ores.

In *Pharmako/poeia*, Dale Pendell draws attention to *Prunus emarginata*, a wild bitter Cherry native to California, also known as the Mad River Plant, as a visionary ally. Smoking a pipeful of the air-dried leaves produces a curious stimulation and inspiration that is most useful for 'impatient artists.'

Wild Cherry Bitters.

Wild Cherries, whole, with stones	20 g
Dried Cherries	25 g
Wild Cherry twigs, 1–2 mm diameter	5 g
Orange peel, dried	3 g
Bourbon Whiskey 50–55% abv	

¶ This formulation produces a bitter with intensely concentrated Cherry fruit flavor, aromatically balanced by addition of the stones and bark. Ripe fruits, each pricked several times, are placed into the steeping vessel, together with the remaining dry ingredients and the Bourbon, and steeped for at least three months in a sealed vessel. At the conclusion of this time the whole is strained and bottled, then used as a meditative adjunct when contemplating the tree, or for cocktails or spritzers where bitters are desired.



CHESTNUT

Castanea sativa

Fagaceæ (Oak Family)

THE Sweet Chestnut is native to Southern Europe and Asia Minor, but is also found northward, as in England, where they have been in evidence since the 7th century. It is a deciduous tree growing to 40 meters in height with gray brown, deeply-ridged bark, prefering sunlight but tolerating shade. Conspicuous by its sizable lanceolate leaves, which grow to 30 cm in length, the Chestnut produces a round spiny pod containing several seeds, or edible nuts, usually three. Generally, the trees are long-lived, and a single tree can produce a harbest of up to 300 kg of nuts. The spiritual character of old Chestnut groves is profound, with a serene presence suggesting beneficience and sanctuary.

To increase esculence, the seeds or nuts are roasted, boiled or baked. In cooking, their texture and savor can approximate cream, and it is therefore a superb addition to soups and sauces. They are also used for candy, liquor, and to render a protein-rich flour. For roasting over a fire, a variety of hand-held chestnut roasters, old and new, are to be found on the market.

Medicinally, it is astringent, antioxidant, antispasmodic, cardiotonic and nutritive. Leaf-infusions have been used to treat diarrhea, as well as respiratory complaints. The bark is strongly astringent, with tannin concentrations sufficient to promote its ethnobotanical use as a dyeing and tanning agent. Because of its strong tannic nature, both the infusion and decoction of various parts of the Chestnut tree have been used externally to treat topical aggravations, sores and dermatitis. It also provides an important and coveted lumber wood which is light, hard, durable, and presents ease of working.

The tree is aligned with Venus and Jupiter, and its spiritual powers are Fortification, Protection, Fertility, and Beneficence. The seed is carried in pocket as a charm against rheumatism, similar to Potato. Similar charms from Germany make use of it as an amulet to prevent hemhorroids. In Bulgaria, strings of the nuts are employes as protection against evil. Three nuts, carried in the pocket, are said to bring good fortune.

CHICORY

Cichorium intybus

Asteraceæ (Sunflower Family)

A BIENNIAL HERB of cosmopolitan distribution, growing to one meter in height with bitter, dentate basal leaves, a savory root, and arresting flowers of electric blue. One infrequently finds Chicory bearing pink or white blossoms. The leaves were formerly used as a salad green, while the root, owing to its palatability, is roasted and used to fortify coffee, or brewed alone as a coffee substitute. In North America, particularly in the west, it is often seen populating roadsides. Varieties cultivated as vegetables include Radicchio and Belgian Endive.

The whole of the plant contains principles which are both hepatic and bitter in nature. For inflammation of the stomach, a compress is made from the leaves and blossoms; this can be applied to sore or irritated eyes. These same portions can be used to render asn infusion for an eyewash. As with its close kin the Dandelion, a Chicory root decoction is specific for gout, jaundice, cirrhosis, and rheumatism. Care should be taken when taking the herb internally, as overindulgence may constipate the digestive corridor. The plant is also a significant source of inulin polysaccharides. Possibly due to its esoteric sympathy with the liver, it was a frequent ingredient in ancient counterpoison formulae, with especial usage for scorpion stings.

The plant has been aligned with the planetary attributes of Jupiter, and sometimes Mercury; older traditions assign it confidently to the Sun, especially as expressed through the constellation of Leo, an attribution well founded given its morphology and habitus. As used in magical operations, its powers encompass Beneficence, Fidelity, Love, Attraction, Coercion, Invisibility, and Revealing. Chicory was an old European charm to aid in childbirth, and the seed has been esteemed as an addition to love-philtres for centuries.

The herb may be considered a minor, but persistent addition to the *materia magica* of root-magic traditions. The root can be added to spells of revealing, or when an operator seeks to locate treasure, a lost object or person, or see through a deception. In England, Chicory had a minor reputation as a strewing-flower for the graves of the dead.

Like the Mandrake, Chicory could grant one the powers of Invisibility, as well as the ablity to open locked chests, provided a strict gathering ritual was observed. The plant was cut in absolute silence with a gold blade at noon, or midnight on July 25. The rite was strict on the point of total silence, for if the taboo was broken, the harvester would die quickly. The herb also has a magical reputation for protecting the traveler; early American prospectors carried a small root in the pocket to ensure good fortune.

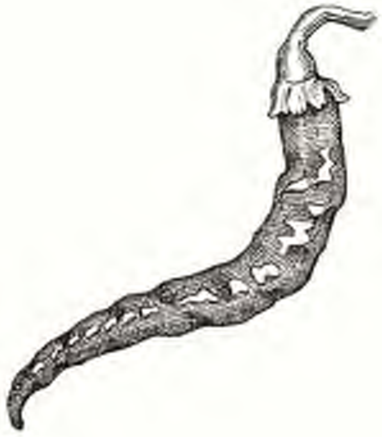
The Discordian *paterfamilias* Kerry Thornley, who investigated and savored many esculent weeds, had this to say about making Chicory coffee:

> Have you ever tasted chicory coffee? The best "chicory" can be made from dandelion and sow thistle roots, both close relatives of the chicory plant. All you do is roast them till brown clear through.

Flower heads are gathered in July; roots are collected in rainy weather in late Autumn; these may be chopped into fine pieces and dried, or in slices, in a warm, well-aired place. To make a root tea, boil one 15 g of the root in 450 ml of water for 5 minutes.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Love, Revealing, Invisibility, Counterpoison.
Planets: Sun, Mercury, Jupiter.
Element: Air.
Star: Polaris and Vega (α Lyræ).
Body Part: Eyes, Liver.
Therapeutic: Moderation.
Affliction: Teetotalism.
Eponymous Compounds: Cichoriin ($C_{15}H_{16}O_9$).
Emblem: A veiled nymph clad in pale blue, a cup in her right hand and a key in her left.



CHILE PEPPER

Capsicum spp.
Solanaceæ (Nightshade Family)

THE Nightshade Family, its members so well known for their crippling poisons, ingredients of sorcery, and economically important foods, was the evolutionary pathway for the emergence of the Chile Pepper, a plant firmly in possession of all three aspects. The Pepper is an annual or perennial endemic to the tropical Americas but has been cultivated throughout the world since colonial times. The herb grows to 2 meters, having white or purple pentacle-shaped flowers, ovate or lanceolate leaves, and capsule-like fruits containing a fiery seed core. The type species is *Capsicum annuum*; the fruit and seed are the plant portions employed. Red fruits yield the natural carotenoid dye Capsicum Red.

There are thousands of cultivars of the annual species *Capsicum anuum*, the more common of which include Jalepeño, Anaheim, Ancho, and Poblano. Like the recent history of Cannabis, prevalent breeding trends have focused on concentrating the most active chemical principles—in the case of Peppers, the heat-producing capsacin—largely to the detriment of other characteristics (such as flavor). Taxonomy in the genus is complex; there was much debate on what constituted individual species until recent advances in phylogeny. Estimates based on current research place the number of *Capsicum* species between 25 and 38 individual species, with five under cultivation.

The Spirit-Retinue of Chile Pepper

Instigation, Inflammation, Swellings, Blisters,
Calidity, Oppugnation, Diabolism, Paroxysm,
Pricklings, Fiery Rumpus, Caustic
Proliferation, Fuming Offense,
and Forceful Rout.

Its fiery principle capsacin ($C_{18}H_{27}NO_3$) is a dermal irritant, vesicant, and rubefacient, and has been effectively weaponized for use by both military and civilian forces in the form of pepper spray. Chile Pepper's aggressive, repellent nature is reflected in its occult and sorcerous usages, which most often are directed toward Exorcism, Binding, Protection or maledictive operations of various types. In many of these spells, the pepper acts as an irritant or *provocatueur*, unsurprising given its spicy qualities.

It features frequently as a botanical ingredient in African American magic, including Voodoo and Hoodoo, especially involving binding, banishing, or for *maleficia* to cause a person to die. In one spell to cause disturbance, the pepper is combined with catfish spines. Red Pepper pods are thrown onto a fire to drive witches from a house in North Carolinian magic.

In certain Indonesian charms, the raw flesh of peppers are rubbed into wounds to torment and banish the demons responsible for the illness. Strung as an amulet and hung from the walls or the ceiling, it has served in folk-magic as a potent house-ward, frustrator of noxious spirits, and charm against the Evil Eye.

Aztec ritual use of the burning chile peppers is testified to in evocative images of the *Codex Mendoza* (c. 1541), showing a bound child being passed through the caustic smoke, but the purpose of the ritual is uncertain. In modern Algeria, red Chile peppers, due to the pungency of their smell and taste, are regarded as potent charms against the Evil Eye.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Exorcism, Protection from Maleficia, Hostility, Potentiation.
Planets: The Sun and Mars.
Element: Fire.
Deific Forms: Tezcatlipoca, Eleggua, Guede.
Body Part: Skin, Mucous Membranes.
Therapeutic: Sensory Overload.
Affliction: Rage.
Emblem: A crimson bowl fashioned from an inverted skull, belching fire and smoke.

CHRIST'S THORN JUJUBE

Ziziphus spina-christi
Rhamnaceæ (Buckthorn Family)

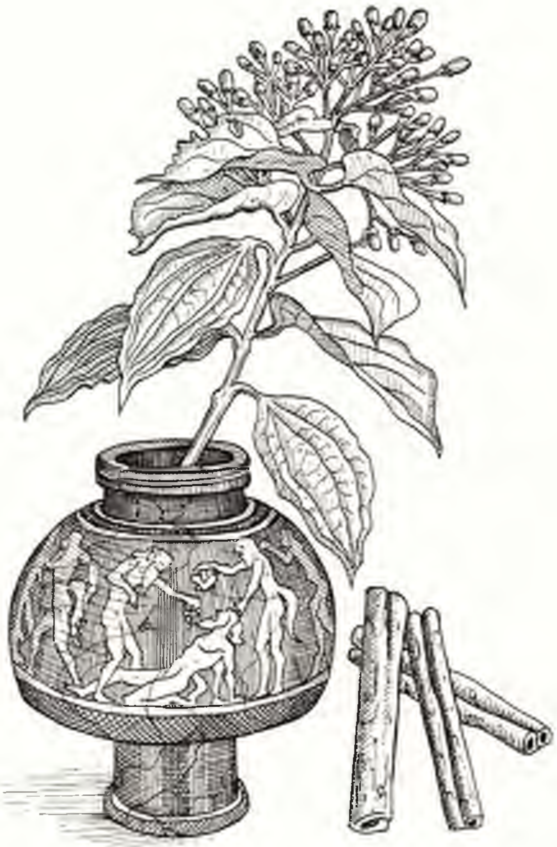
WITHIN the dry woodlands and deserts of the Mediterranean dwells the hardy Christ's Thorn, one of several noble trees in the genus *Ziziphus*. Growing to 20 meters in height, its leaves leaves are alternate ovate or elliptical, with yellow or green flowers. The fruit, a sweet, red drupe containing a hard pit, was used in ancient Egypt to make a kind of bread, and in modern times it is a valued food of the Bedouin. Medicinally, it is accorded a rich diversity of curing powers, both topically and internally: among these are leaf-poultices used for various dermal complaints, as well as leaves and fruit being used as a depurative and tonic.

Among many Christians, it is venerated as the shrub from which Christs's crown of thorns was woven, and the red sap which pours forth from the injured tree was understood to carry the symbolism of the Blood of the Crucified Jesus. Because of these associations, sprigs and leaves of the tree were taken by Christian pilgrims as sanctified mementoes of pilgrimage.

Magically, it confers sacred protection and benediction, and many traditions redolent of animist tree worship persist around this plant. Some legends relate an assembly of saints which protect the tree from harm, appearing after its 40th year of life.

In the Sudan, the Christ's Thorn is used for diverse medicinal purposes, as well as protection magic; a maceration of the leaves is drunk or used as a body wash to repel the repugnant power of the Evil Eye. In Israel, infertile women made pilgrimages to a sacred Christ's Thorn in order to conceive children.

Its relative *Ziziphus lotus*, the Lote Tree, inhabits a similar range. Its religious significance in Islam as the *Sidrat al-Muntahā*, marking the very extent of creation or 'utmost boundary', is highlighted in the Quran, Sura 53, where it is hailed as *the Lote-tree beyond which none may pass.* It stands at the limit of the Seventh Heaven, wherein dwell Adam and Eve.



CINNAMON

Cinnamomum verum
Lauraceæ (Laurel Family)

NATIVE to Sri Lanka, the perfumed Cinnamon tree grows to to 15 meters, having glossy, ovate leaves, and fragrant yellow or greenish flowers. Its fruit is a small drupe which, though aromatic, is less so than the bark. Under cultivation, this evergreen is managed more as a shrub, and the bark and twigs are harvested, supplying the spice of commerce.

For greatest quality and strength of aromatics, the whole dried twig should be procured. The pre-ground spice is subject to the insidious ravages of oxidation, which unfavorably alters its aromatics; adulteration of Cinnamon can be an issue, sometimes with less potent species such as *Cinnamomun cassia*, which is more bitter than *C. verum.* Cinnamon essential oil is readily available commercially but is of variable quality and often stripped of many subtle 'green' and 'woody' aromatics and is not recommended for use. Much of the Cinnamon of commerce is in fact C. *cassia.*

> The Phoenix excretes a worm, and from the excretion Cinnamon comes into existence, which kings and princes use.
>
> III BARUCH, 6:12

In ethnomedicine, Cinnamon is often used for treating colds and fever. The medical tractate *Trotula* recommended the bark in wine as a gargle for strengthening the uvula, and traditional Sudanese medicine reckons it a fertility aid for women, in combination with other botanicals. In India, Cinnamon has long been used for treating diabetes, and in some Turkish traditions it is valued as a traditional aphrodisiac.

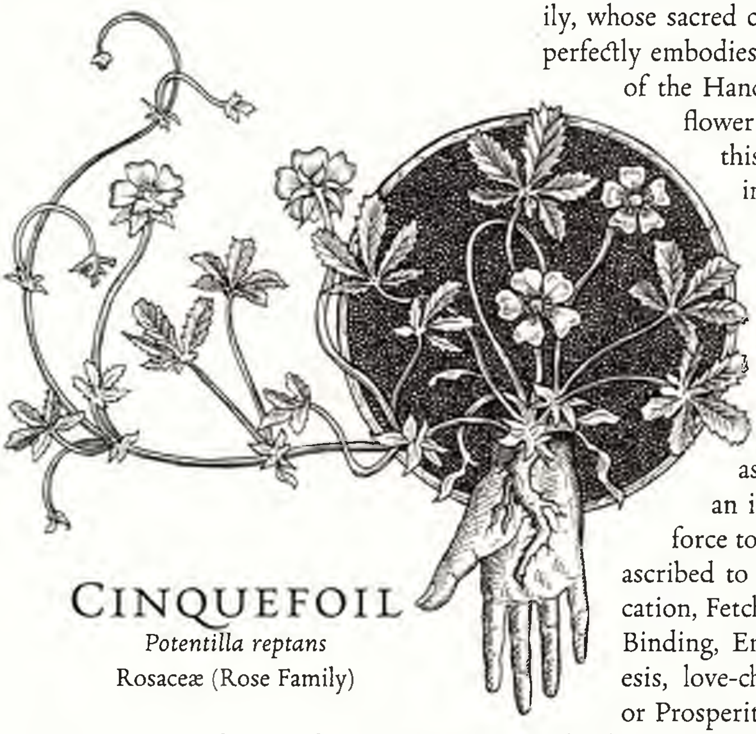
The *Hiera Picra* or "Sacred Bitters" of the ancient Greeks was considered a holy panacea; Galen's recipe for this mixture was compounded of Cinnamon, Mastic, Soccotrine Aloes, Spikenard, Saffron, Asarum, Xylobalsamum, and honey. Another version, a cathartic preparation known as *Gira pigra* was a combination of cinnamon bark and Soccotrine Aloes.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF CINNAMON

Inspiration, Hearthfire, Expansion, Radiance, Sharpness, Preservation, Rootedness, Confidence, Confrontation, Provocation, Royal Bequests, Inflamed Prurience, and Wanton Frolics.

Owing principally to its warmth and character of assertiveness, Cinnamon is aligned with the Sun and the element of Fire. Its occult powers are Consecration, Healing, Lust, Purification, Success, Reconciliation, Wealth, and Fortification. Despite its abstracted status as a spice, we recall that Cinnamon is a bark, and thus a wood; its aromatics thus contain a fraction of that arboreal character, and also align it esoterically with Earth. When smoldered as an incense, the fragrant bark retains its balsamic scent, and is an appropriate admixture to burnt ritual offertings to spirits and deities of elemental fire. Owing also to its expansive yet balsamic nature, it serves well, if used sparingly, as an addition to incenses intended to catalyze contemplation and reverie.

Cinnamon is used in Hoodoo as a powerful protectant against offensive spirits; the oil is rubbed into the hands to prevent psychic attack; and a powder compounded of Cinnamon and sugar is sprinkled about the home to keep police away. The grimoire *Almadel* specifies a Solar planetary suffumigation compounded from Cinnamon and Frankincense.



CINQUEFOIL

Potentilla reptans

Rosaceæ (Rose Family)

CINQUEFOIL is known by its prostrate growing habit, as its specific name suggests, and can be found creeping along the ground on roadsides, grasslands and in wastes. It has feathery, palmate leaves, and rooting stolons, much like Strawberry, with golden five-petaled summer flowers. The genus *Potentilla* has undergone revision, former members such as *Potentilla anserina* (Silver Cinquefoil) are now classed as *Argentina*; this plant is used as a traditional incense in Tibet. When used in magic, Cinquefoil bears the planetary resonances of Jupiter and Venus, and when used in medicine, the Sun.

As a medicament its powers are astringent, antiseptic, sedative, nervine, anodyne, and anti-inflammatory. A traditional cordial is made from the ground root and leaf for sore throats and cough; the herb is also used to arrest internal hemorrhaging. Tannin-rich, the powder is also valued as a gargle for ulcers of the mouth, toothache, and swollen tonsils.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF CINQUEFOIL

Mastery, Manipulation, Production, Configuration,
Requisition, Invitation, Courtship, Patronage,
Aid, Largess, Arousing Adornments,
Charmed Tongues, & Manifold Potentials.

Cinquefoil proceeds from the Rose Family, whose sacred characteristics its morphology perfectly embodies, having the sacred Pentalpha of the Hand, as well as golden, rose-like flower with heart-shaped petals. For this reason, its power is accessed in a great diversity of magical operations, first being the works of the hand: control and command. As a 'controller' of spiritual forces it is often used to 'turn' situations to one's advantage; for this reason, I refer to it as *Hand of Fate*. Secondly, it is an inflamer of ardor, thus giving force to love charms. Other potencies ascribed to it include Protection, Purification, Fetching, Protection from Poison, Binding, Enchanted Speech, Oneirogenesis, love-charms and rites of Increase, or Prosperity. The powdered root is also valued as a magical potentiator, added to combinations of other plants of power in order to increase synergy and efficacy.

In folk magic, the plant was used as an amulet, the herb suspended in doorways to prevent the intrusion of pestilent spirits. Chiseled representations of Cinquefoil, thought to serve a magical function, may sometimes be spotted adorning the ceilings of ancient cathedrals. *Potentilla reptans* also appears as an uncommon ingredient in the witches' flying ointment formulae. In medieval erotic magic, a love-powder was compounded of equal parts leaves of Cinquefoil, Vervain, and Periwinkle. Two pinches of this powder were added to wine, then left to steep 12 hours, then strained before serving. A fine liqueur may also be made from the flowers.

Invoking its sacred geometry of the fivefold star, a Hoodoo charm of protection employs Cinquefoil, together with a piece of paper upon which the 23rd Psalm has been inscribed, enclosed in a cloth pouch next to the skin.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Coercion, Love, Protection, Potentiation.
Planets: Jupiter, Venus (the Sun).
Elements: Fire.
Medicine: Astringent, Antiseptic.
Body Part: Hand.
Magical Gesture: Upright Pentalpha.
Number: 5.
Emblem: A human hand, with a five-petaled golden flower in its palm, and lightning emanating from its fingertips.

Cinquefoil Cordial.

80 g dried Cinquefoil herb (or one handful fresh)
1 quart Rhine Wine

❡ Infuse the herbs in a sealed vessel for 2 days, agitating frequently, then press the marc dry. Seal in tightly-stoppered container and store in a dark cabinet. Take four ounces twice daily.

CITRUS

Citrus spp.

Rutaceæ (Rue Family)

CITRUS is a botanical genus encompassing thirty or more species of small trees originally domesticated in the tropics but now also grown in temperate regions. The fruits are esculent, acidic and highly aromatic, while the fragrant rinds contain strong concentrations of essential oils. The flowers and leaves are highly aromatic, and are also valued in rituals, magic, medicine and perfumery. The trees require regular warmth and irrigation and are occasionally thorned. Some Citrus species such as Yuzu (*Citrus junos*) produce not only aromatic fruits but also workable wood for limited applications. The peel of most Citrus species, thinly sliced and pared of its fibrous underlayer, readily dries in a day. An aromatic tincture can be prepared using the dried rind, the leaves, or the flower in its fresh form.

Taxonomy is complex and a source of continual phylogenetic befuddlement, with the genus frequently undergoing revision. Most cultivated Citrus species seem to have arisen as natural or artificial hybrids of ancestor species such as the Pomelo (*Citrus maxima*). Beyond the individuals clearly identified as species, there are countless hybrids.

Cultivation of oranges in northern Europe in the 1600s required the construction of 'orangeries' or glass houses for climate control. At one time a status-symbol and the privilege of the very wealthy, the orangery was the foundation of modern greenhouse design and technology.

Generally, the occult properties of all Citrus species encompass two primary arenas. The first is characterized by magic used against evil spirits, including Purification and Exorcism. When contemplating this aspect of the trees, we recall that Citrus belongs to the botanical family Rutaceæ, whose type species is Rue (*Ruta graveolens*). Perhaps more than any other plant, Rue is used magically against foul entities of all types, as well as the baneful influence of the Evil Eye. In common with Rue, Citrus species are also defined by a strong, often overpowering, aromatic character. In China, the Pomelo (*Citrus maxima*) is accorded with great powers against demons, and a ritual bath made from the rinds assist to cleanse the body of evil spirits. *Citrus sinensis* used in Belize to dispel evil spirits.

A second magical attribute common to all Citrus species is its power of beauty, Allure, and refreshment. Many are the legends of the power of the fruit to seduce the beholder by its appearance alone. The fruit, leaves, and flowers are also employed for magical purification of the body, through baths and perfumes.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF CITRUS

Cheer, Refreshment, Nobility, Welcome, Invitiation, Generosity, Expansive Sentiment, Sour Effusion, Bright Salutation, Favorable Omen, Good Fortune, and Righteous Armament.

Among the Gayo of Indonesia, traditional Islamic magic for exorcising djinn involves the citrus fruit known as the mungkur (*Citrus hystrix*), better known to the Western horticulturist as the Kaffir Lime. During the first stages of the complex exorcism ritual, the fruit serves as a temporary incarcerating vessel for the possessing spirit, after which it is blown out with a sharp exhalation, and sent back to its origin. This usage relates to Gayo versions of the creation story, in which the the archangel Jibra'il held Adam's soul inside a mungkur fruit. C. *hystrix* is exceedingly aromatic and is used in traditional Indonesian cuisine as well as being valued in perfumery.

The many-tentacled or squid-shaped fruit of the Citron (*Citrus medica* var. *sardodactylis*) also known as 'Buddha's Hand' is esteemed as a potent talisman of good fortune and longevity. In this citrus fruit, the pulp is absent, and the aromatic, magical and medicinal virtues reside in the peel.

CLARY SAGE

Salvia sclarea

Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

ALSO known as *Slary*, this handsome biennial Sage herb is native to Mediterranean Europe, growing to 1 meter in height, with showy flowers ranging in color from white to pink to lavender. Its large leaves are hirsute and resinous. The aerial portions possess a scent both alluring and churlish—redolent in some ways of immature Ambergris—and are sticky to the touch. Clary thrives in sandy or gravelly soil and can become weedy; in the United States, in some areas of the Pacific Northwest, it has been branded a pernicious weed, due to its predilection for overtaking native plants. Medicinally, the plant has been used as a uterine stimulant. Saint Hildegard of Bingen recommended it with honey and Rue, and a small amount of Thorn Apple, to purge poison from the body. It has also answered to the old names of Clear Eyes, and Gallitricum; prized wild plants were known as *Oculus Christi*, the Eye of Christ.

The stupefying properties of the herb were well-known to the ancients. Dioscorides documents the fortification of wine with Clary for the inflammation of erotic desire. In Europe, the flowers have been used for centuries to augment wine and liqueurs for greater intoxicating power: *Sophistication* was the term used by the Old English for adding Clary to beer. As late as the 1800s, it was employed as a substitute for hops in beer, causing "an insane exhilaration of spirits." Despite its tendency to inebriation, the leaves and flowers possess a pleasant, though pungent, taste.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF CLARY SAGE

Enthusiasmos, Excess, Efflorescence, Phrenesis,
Vivication, Expansion, Reeling, Dizziness,
Stupefaction, Thrall, Rousing Spice,
Effluvious Fervor, and Rustic Desire.

Its occult principles are Allure, Lust, and Madness, and its usage is often present in charms of a sexual nature. Because of its unique animal-like scent, it is also suggested for magical operations and preparations relating to animals. The essential oil is readily available but varies in quality based on extraction method, source material, and whether the oils is extracted from the leaf or the flower.

CORRESPONDENCES

Essence: Delirium.
Powers: Allure, Madness, and Atavistic Rites.
Planets: The Sun and Venus.
Element: Earth.
Body Part: Genitals/Musk.
Domain: Garrigue.
Medicine: Aphrodisiac.
Poison: Stupefacient.
Eponymous Compounds: Sclareol—$C_{20}H_{36}O_2$.
Affliction: Drunkenness.
Embodied State: Rut.
Emblem: Drunken revelers dance in a blossoming thicket, clad in masks and animal skins.

Tincture of Clary Sage.

One of the most potent medicines derived from Clary, and indeed from the herb garden itself, the Tincture of Clary can be added in small doses to ritual draughts when additional deliriant properties are desired. In ideal usage the tincture is an exhilarant, in greater doses it provokes foolishness, torpor, vertigo and swift degradation of good sense.

❡ After the plant has set flower, harvest inflorescences when they are at their peak and full of nectar, and the petals still fresh and supple. Inter whole blossoms in a large steeping vessel with sufficient distilled spirit to cover, at a strength of 60% ABV or higher. Allow to steep for two months, then strain and bottle. Potency can vary by plant, time of harvest, and strength of the tincturing menstruum; its strength may be initially gauged by the addition of one dropperful to a glass of wine. Some also use the leaves for this preparation, or a combination of leaves and fowers, according to personal preference.

CLEMATIS

Clematis spp.

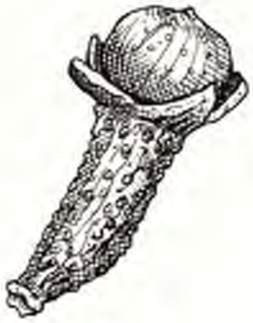
Ranunculaceæ (Buttercup Family)

A GENUS dominated by sprawling, woody vines, *Clematis* encompasses approximately 300 species, valued in medicine, magic and horticulture. Like their flowers, common names for individual species have varied widely and conveyed colorful associations: Ghoſt's Lariat, Devil's Thread, Old Man's Beard, Virgin's Bower, Flammula Jovis. In ancient Greece, Clematis was sacred to Dionysus. As used in magic, its esoteric principles include Protection from noxious spirits, Trickery, Deception, Warfare, and use as a travelling charm. In Eaſtern European folk tradition, garlands and boughs of *Clematis vitalba* are important as protective charms for the house and liveſtock, especially on St. George's Day (May 6).

In folk medicine, the plant is tonic, vesicant, diuretic, diaphoretic. As with many plants in the Buttercup family, the bruised flesh of the leaves can be a severe irritant and provoke raging inflammations. It is useful locally and internally for cancerous, syphilitic and other ulcerous conditions. Various species have been employed for cold and sore throats, and externally as a wash for scabs and eczema of the head; the bark of *Clematis liguſticifolia,* native to weſtern North America, was used to allay fevers. Eſteemed as a medicine to promote hair growth, it was known by the name *Wikiákshopi.*

The Blackfoot name *Ghoſt's Lariat* arose from the mischievous nature of the herb; because of its habit of creeping across trails in proſtrate tangles, travellers would often be tripped by unseen or unexpected outgrowths of vegetation. The ſtems of milder types of Clematis have been smoked in lieu of Tobacco.

Much in the manner of the Cursed Buttercup, the venomous leaves of certain species of Clematis have been used by beggars to induce lesions, and bliſters, the better to garner sympathy. One such species, *C. vitalba*, possesses a venomous juice, provoking angry eruptions on the skin, and violent cramps in the ſtomach.



CLOVE

Syzygium aromaticum

Myrtaceæ (Myrtle Family)

A TROPICAL evergreen tree of bushy habit to 10 meters high, Clove is endemic to the Maluku islands, also known as the Moluccas. The glossy dark green leaves are elliptical and arranged in opposite pairs; the flower cluſters are red, giving way to oblong fruits. Moſt parts of the tree including the bark are aromatic, but the dried unopened bud contains the greateſt concentration of aromatics and is the portion commonly referred to as a 'clove'. Known as a spice in ancient Rome, it was a known commodity in medieval Europe, although rare and expensive at that time.

Medicinally, it is antimicrobial, and a topical anaeſthetic, chewed for toothache in many folk healing traditons. These numbing properties of Clove are due in part to the aromatic compound Eugenol ($C_{10}H_{12}O_2$), which comprises a significant portion of the fragrance profile of *Syzygium aromaticum.* Considered warming, Cloves are allied to such antimicrobial aromatic plants as Cardamom, Cinnamon, Ginger and Black Pepper which share this energetic. As such, it is a natural culinary ally of curry blends and *garam masala.* A diversity of medicinal formulae bear witness to its heat-producing nature: an infusion of the buds is used as a ſtimulant in Guyana, and the flowers are used in Turkey as an aphrodisiac. In addition to serving as a mild topical anaeſthetic, essential oil of Clove is an effective spot peſticide, particularly againſt ants.

Clove is allied to the Sun and to the element Fire; its occult powers are Bidding, Luſt, Attraction, Money, Success in Business, Protection, Summoning, and Triumph. In India, the flowers are offered to Shiva.

The Spirit-Retinue of Clove

Enkindlement, Sustentation, Saporosity, Zest, Titillation, Captivation, Bodily Enrichment, Solar Perspiration, Quiet Wardship, Disciplined Fire, Strict Antisepsis, Tempered Sensation, and Floral Munition.

In the Moluccas, Clove necklaces were worn as a talisman to protect against evil spirits, or against infectious influences responsible for disease.

In North American conjure magic, to attract customers to a business, root-doctors burn cloves mixed with salt into a powder, then sprinkle the resulting dust in the four corners of the store for nine successive mornings. Individual Cloves may be used as potent talismans of coercion to control another person's will.

When burned or smoldered as an incense, the ground bud releases its fragrance remarkably true to the plant's natural aromatics and combines particularly well with tree resins. These characteristics were well understood by the compilers of European ritual magic *grimoires*. *The Book of Angels, Rings, Characters and Images of the Planets*, recommends a Lunar incense compounded of Cloves, Mastic and Aloes Wood. The grimoire *Almadel* specifies a planetary perfume for Mercury consisting of Storax, Cloves, and Mastic. The plant's faithful aromatic principles under the pressures of combustion are also effectively used as an incense by burning a *kretek*, an Indonesian Clove cigarette, often mixed with Tobacco, which itself provides a harmonious aroma.

CLOVER

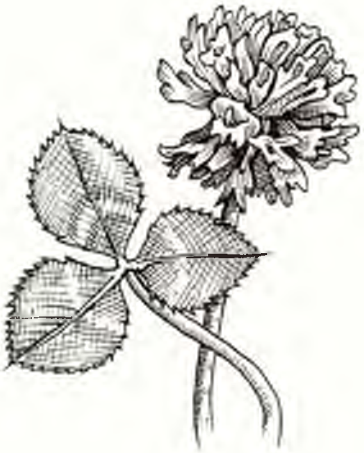
Trifolium spp.

Fabaceæ (Pea Family)

CLOVERS are annual herbs with dense, strobile-like flower heads ranging in color from white to yellow to dark crimson and bearing eponymous trifoliate leaves. The elusive four and five-leaved exemplars are a natural, but uncommon, variants. Common species are Red Clover (*T. pratense*) and White Clover (*T. repens*). Other genera resembling and sometimes called Clover are Medick (*Medicago* spp.) and Melilot (*Melilotus* spp.).

In medicine, as well as magic, the leaves and flowers are the portions used; the presence of phytoestrogens and coumarins reveal its toxic, as well as potential healing applications. Red Clover is antispasmodic and expectorant. It is traditionally used for bronchitis and whooping cough, and some anti-cancer therapies. Topically, various clovers may be used for scrapes and burns.

The magical potencies attributed to Clovers are Invisibility, Revelation, Protection from noxious spirits, Curse Lifting, Love, and Success in Commerce. It is also linked to wealth; country lore is replete with the appearance of four-leaved clovers as a portent of sudden windfall and riches. Clovers inhabit the twin planetary dominions of Mercury and Jupiter.



Trefoils were sovereign charms for luck, love and protection from evil. Clover comes from the Latin *clava*, or club, its three leaflets reminiscent of the three-headed club of Hercules. In the Middle Ages, a cloverleaf worn on the clothing was a protective talisman in warfare and travel.

As a group the Trefoils were esteemed for their power to conquer evil spirits. Clovers, especially those with four leaves, are said to possess the virtue of disintegrating the enchantments of the faerie. English lore relates that four grains of wheat, wrapped in a leaf of red clover (*Trifolium pratense*) makes an excellent magical talisman to allow one to see the Fair Folk.

The legendary Irish *seamrog*, or Shamrock, though it may refer to a diversity of clover-like plants, is most often used for *T. repens* or *T. dubium*. Tradition holds that the Shamrock with four or five leaves is a charm of great power, but only if discovered by chance, rather than hunted. Shamrocks have also been prized in Irish magic as charms against the Evil Eye. In curing and magic, the recumbent Clover reminds us that sometimes the highest powers are found in the lowest places.

COFFEE

Coffea arabica

Rubiaceæ (Madder Family)

THE genus *Coffea* contains long-lived shrubs native to Africa but now widely cultivated in the tropics. Its leaves are elliptical, ceraceous, opposite in arrangement and with prominent veins; the briefly appearing flowers are white or pink. The fruits are yellow drupes ripening to red or purple—the coffee 'berries' which in turn contain a seed, the so-called 'bean' of commerce. C. *arabica* is the predominant workhorse species, dominating coffee agriculture, though C. *canephora*, also known as Robusta—favored for its bitterness and nutlike flavor when roasted—is also widely used. With just over 120 accepted species, the genus *Coffea* exhibits considerable diversity of forms and chemical profiles, with some species such as the critically endangered C. *charrieriana* having no caffeine at all. America's largest coffee plantings are in Hawai'i, with the Kaua'i Coffee Company holding in excess of 3,000 acres. Rare varieties and oversized mutant beans such as as the eponymous 'Big Braddah' are grown there, as are more traditional commercial strains of C. *arabica* such Red Catui.

The alkaloid for which the plant is fetishized is the stimulant caffeine, though lesser amounts of the xanthines theophylline and theobromine are also present. Within the plant itself, caffeine is understood evolutionarily as a native endogenous poison, a biochemical defense against herbivores and pests. In addition, the flower nectar also contains small amounts of caffeine, which serves as a mnemonic attractant for pollinators such as bees. In addition to the seed, the fruits and leaves contain caffeine and are brewed into traditional drinks, such as *al-kahwa al-kishriyra*, the strong and highly esteemed 'husk coffee'.

The Spirit-Retinue of Coffee

Instrumentality, Inception, Quickening, Aid, Arousal, Stamina, Vigilance, Fealty, Wardenship, Dispersion, Cardinal Expression, Refined Thought, and Animated Poesis.

As with many plant stimulants, Coffee is rightly given to the planetary attributes of Mercury. In equal measure, owing to its habitus and tendencies toward warmth and activation, it is also Solar. In its magical expressions, it is protective, strengthening and potentiating; given its action in neutralizing odors and acting as a 'reset' for the olfactory sense, it also expresses the magical action of Banishing.

In the Balkans, a rite from the villages of Mount Kopaonik used a single coffee bean, together with one grain of wheat, a non-folding penknife, garlic, a grain of salt, and a small yew-wood cross. These objects were placed in the cradle as a blessing, for protection of a newborn. In Albania, Coffee beans are used as amulets against the Evil Eye.

Coffee-grounds are used for divination in Hoodoo, as with Russian folk magic. In Canada, a folk belief of Ontario regards the froth in a coffee cup as an omen of wealth, especially if collected in a spoon and drunk prior to dissolving.

From the stock of cures emerging from Spanish-American traditions, a cold remedy in New Mexico was prepared from Black Pepper ground into brewed coffee and drunk. This recalles the traditional Mexican drink Café de Olla, made from Coffee, boiled with *piloncillo* sugar, cinnamon, and sometimes other spices such as orange zest.

COLOCYNTH

Citrullus colocynthus

Cucurbitaceæ (Gourd Family)

THE VINE OF SODOM is a hardy desert plant with a large fleshy tap root, oddly palmate leaves, and a spherical gourdlike fruit, with alternating bands of pale and dark green. Climbing with tendrils, it often overtakes nearby shrubs, and is distributed in Libya, Arabia, Nubia, the Levant and elsewhere in the Mediterranean. Flourishing in Southern Arabia and Yemen, it is known as *Hanzal*, and its ancient use in traditional medicine is attested by archæobotanical evidence as well as an inscription in the Mārib region predating the 7th century BCE.

The fruit, the pulp of which is a drastic purgative, appears as an ingredient in classical Arabic sources, including formularies of pharmacy and poison. When consumed at higher than therapeutic doses, the plant is toxic, as is attested by its avoidance by livestock. The same pulp, when dried, is made into a pain-relieving ointment; the fruits are sometimes cut in half and bound to areas of the body as a poultice to cure muscle ache. The bitter, medicinal-toxic principles from which these powers are derived are known as cucurbitacins. The plant also has an ancient reputation in folk medicine as an abortifacient, and is still used in this manner, occasionally being fatal to the patient.

The magical properties of Colocynth are Exorcism, Purification, and Protection from Maleficia. The fruits are valued by Muslims and Yemenite Jews as protective against the Evil Eye; they are hung in the household for this purpose, and pieces of the rind are used in amulets to turn away corruption and ill magic, as well as to promote spiritual health. The fruit's power against evil was understood in part to align with its bitter poison, and planting seeds at burial sites was thought to extend the plant's protection of the deceased into the afterlife. In Algeria, the plant is used by the Shawiya Berbers as protection against the class of spirits known as the *jenoun* or jinn, who abhor its smell.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF COLOCYNTH

Hoarding, Treasure, Interment, Occupation, Buffering, Ouster, Proscription, Abstersion, Nausea, Disorientation, Corrosive Onslaught, Ardent Defense, and Archaic Remedy.

COLUMBINE

Aquilegia spp.

Ranunculaceæ (Buttercup Family)

MOST characteristic and beloved among alpine flowers, the Columbine is an herbaceous perennial growing to to 1 meter, with flowers of varying colors, each bearing long, hooked spurs on the back, and producing glossy black seeds. The genus *Aquilegia* contains more than 70 species, mostly populating temperate regions of Asia and Europe, though many are native to North America as well. The flowers and seeds are the portions most often used.

Columbines contain varying levels of toxins, including prussic acid and cardiac poisons. Many compounds are as yet unidentified by science but resemble glycosides in essence. Effects of poisoning include shortness of breath, heart weakness, and cramps, but cases of poisoning are rare, and fatalities rarer. As used in folk medicine it is diuretic, diaphoretic, antiscorbutic, laxative, and emmenagogue. In medieval and Renaissance medicine, the leaves and seeds were compounded into a lotion to ease sore throats.

In planetary correspondence, Columbine is aligned with Venus, with a secondary influence of Saturn; its chief occult uses are in charms, possessing the powers of Allure and Coercion. In North America, the fragrant seeds of Red Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*) were used among the Ponca, Omaha, and Pawnee as love charms and perfumes, usually crushed into a paste and used to scent the clothes. Crushed seed capsules were also mixed with Tobacco and smoked as a love charm. Tea made from the root and leaf was esteemed to provide the drinker with the powers of enchanted speech.

COMPOSITÆ

IN botanical taxonomy, the former name for the Sunflower, Aster or Daisy Family, now known as Asteraceae. Family members are known as *composites*, for their compound infloresences, formed of many tiny flowers: for example, the golden many-petaled disc generally thought of as a single sunflower is in fact many flowers, as is evidenced by the numerous fruits left behind in the head upon ripening—Sunflower 'seeds.' Although Compositae is still considered valid nomenclature, it is much less used, yet remains for the herbalist a powerful mnemonic from a more elegant taxonomical era.

CONFETTI BUSH

Coleonema spp.

Rutaceæ (Rue Family)

ALSO known as Konfettibos, the genus *Coleonema* contains shrubs of 8 species native to South Africa, growing 1-2 meters in height, with feathery foliage, and white or pink flowers. The leaves are aromatic, and sometimes resinous, having a pleasant scent evocative of citrus, vanilla and pinene. Outside its native range, it is found in garden landscapes of North America where it is called Breath of Heaven, as a finely textured, wind-resistant horticultural plant preferring sun. Commonly available Confetti Bush species include C. *pulchellum*. Medicinally, leaf extracts of some species have demonstrated antifungal activity as topical medicaments, this usage derived from traditional use of the plant among the Khoisan peoples. Another aromatic species is Cape May (C. *album*).

It is aligned with Venus, and its magical properties are Consecration, Allure, and Protection. Its bright and cheerful scent, as well as its soft texture, makes it an ideal herb for strewing, as well as extraction of its aromatics into alcohol, or boiled in decoction to yield a fragrant skin wash.

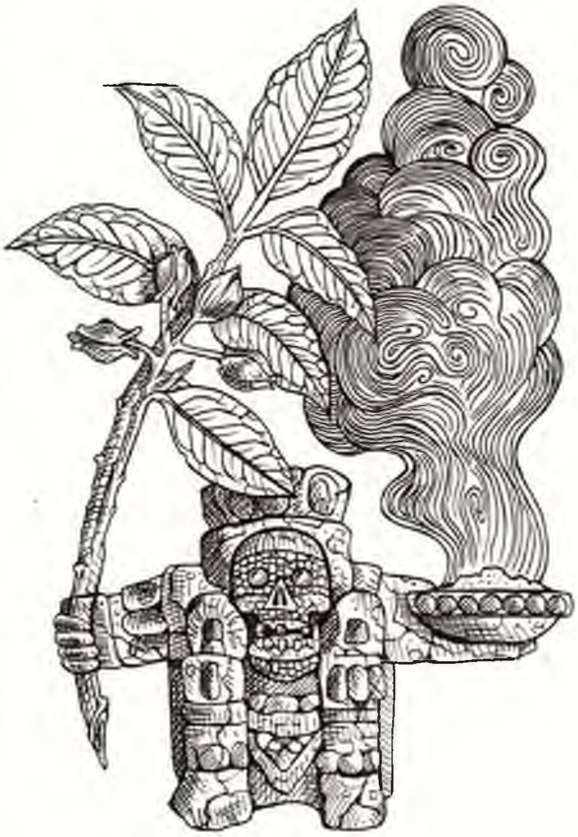
CONVOLVULACEÆ

THE botanical family of the Bindweeds, including such members as Morning Glories, Cornbinds, Scammony, High John the Conqueror, Ololiúqui, Sweet Potatoes, and Hawaiian Woodroses. Most members of the family are aggressive climbers native to the tropics and subtropics, with cordate (heart-shaped) leaves and twining tendrils. Several species produce seeds with visionary or poisonous virtues; many, though having ancient magical or medicinal esteem, are just beginning to be examined by science. For example, in India thrives the Convolvulaceous herb *Ipomoea turbinata* or the Shiva Tendril, identified by some as the probable identity of the ancient traditional aphrodisiac Lakshmana. It is regarded as one of the finest *vajikarana*, or traditional aphrodisiacs, and is used as a semenagogue and in yogic practices.

COPAL

Bursera microphylla, also *B. odorata*, *Protium* spp.
Burseraceæ (Torchwood Family)

IN magico-religious nomenclature, the substance Copal refers to the resin of a number of Mesoamerican trees in the Frankincense family, mostly belonging to genus *Bursera*, but some in genus *Protium*. 'Copal' is also a technical nomenclature used to describe a more mature form of generic tree resin, mid-way between 'resin' (young) and 'amber' (petrified). The word *copal* comes from the Nahuatl word for incense, *copalli*. Like Frankincense, the resin is obtained by incisions on the trunk and is primarily used as incense. Both the resin and the trees which produce it are referred to by a panoply of names, including Copalquahuitl, Torote, Elephant Tree, Brain of Heaven, Pom, and Olibanum Americanum. Aztecs called her *Ixtaccíhuatl* or 'White Woman.'



Come, Her-Hair-is-Mist, Her Hair is Smoke,
My Mother Chalchiuhcueyeh, White Woman
—Aztec Prayer to Fire, Water and Copal

One Copal tree species, *Bursera microphylla*, whose leaves smell of camphor when crushed, inhabits the extreme southwestern deserts of the United States. Highly adaptable as a desert denizen, the tree's wood is 60–70% water. In Sonora and Baja California Sur the tree reaches a height of 9 meters; in latitudes further north, such as Arizona and California, it is more shrublike, topping out at 2 meters. In medical usage it is a valued stypic, poultice for swellings, taken as a drink or an enema, and used also to remedy strangualtion of the uterus.

In planetary correspondence the virtues of Copal are allied with the Sun, and these principles readily align with kindred magic such as healing and convalescence. As used in magic it lends its power to operations of Purification, Exorcism, Beneficence, Consecration, Healing, Protection, Summoning, Funerary Offering, and Enchanted Speech. The tree is traditionally imbued with the powers of the Mayan lightning god; in Aztec medicine Copal was burnt as an essential adjunct of curing ceremonies; certain spells used it as a healing smudge for spirit-illnesses caused by sexual misconduct or keeping bad company.

Copal is mentioned as a holy offering to the gods in the *Popul Vuh*, one of the few sacred texts of the Maya to survive the massive book burnings of the Spanish Inquistion. In modern healing rites of the shamans of Central America, Copal or other tree resins are burned in generous amounts as spirit offerings. In South America, resin from diverse *Protium* species are valued for their powers of protection from evil spirits, particularly when smoldered for the fragrant smoke. Brazilian Candomblé uses Amescla (*Protium warmingianum*) as a sacred incense. The smoldering of Copal and Pine resins was a sorcerous adjunct to the ancient Magic Mushroom rituals of Mesoamerica. Among the Macushi of Guayana, resin from the Incense Tree (*Protium heptaphyllum*) is compounded into a red body-paint, which is rubbed on the heads of children for protection from disease-causing spirits.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF COPAL

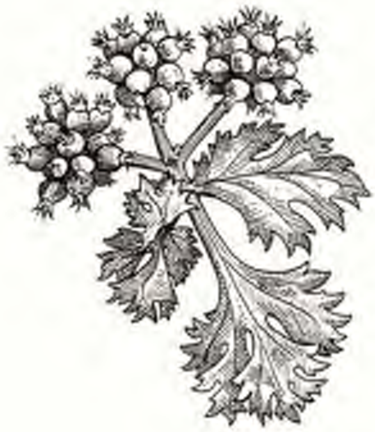
Sacrosanctity, Invulnerability, Magnamanity, Sanguinity, Immolation, Restitution, Elegance, Curative Advocacy, Perfect Blessing, Celestial Fire, Perfumed Wisdom, Vaporous Rapture, and Bloody Sacrifice.

CORIANDER

Coriandrum sativum

Apiaceæ (Dill Family)

CORIANDER or Cilantro is an annual herb growing to 50 cm, identified by its feathery leaves and umbel shaped inflorescences, with white or pale pink flowers. Native to North Africa and Western Asia, it has naturalized in lands far beyond its origin, such as the United Kingdom. Based on archaeological finds, the seed has been valued and used by humans for at least 9,000 years. Older names for the plant include Gad, and Bershau; it was known to alchemists as Cassidbolt.



Coriander is principally used as a spice; the leaves, roots, and seeds are all aromatic, each with distinct scent profiles. The fresh leaves, as well as the ground seed, possess medicinal propertives that are carminitve, stomachic and digestive. Some studies have shown antibacterial activity.

Its esoteric properties are aligned with Mars, and its powers as used in magic are Exorcism, Binding, Marriage, Allure, Ward Against Disease, Visions, and Summoning.

In the traditional magic of North Africa, the fruits, known as *cussbur*, are placed on a fire, or hot coals, to expel evil spirits. A traditional Moroccan coction for driving off pestilent *jinn* is made from coriander seed, water, and earth taken from the grave of a murder victim.

Dioscorides recommended seeds of Coriander steeped in wine to increase the semen; in Libya it is valued as an aphrodisiac, and syrups or infusions are made from the fruits. If the seeds are intended for use in an aphrodiasiac capacity, they should be harvested during the final quarter of the lunar cycle, according to folklore.

In Andean magical curing, the fresh leaves are placed over the eyes to dispel negative influences.

CORN POPPY

Papaver rhoeas

Papaveraceæ (Poppy Family)

AN annual herb growing to 70 cm with bright blood-scarlet flowers, commonly infiltrating cornfields. The blossoms are sometimes employed to colour wines and liqueurs, or in combination with logwood and copperas to dye wool. The capsules are small, 1–2 cm in diameter, and produce an abundance of viable seeds, hence its success as an agricultural weed. Now widespread in the cultivated parts of the northern hemisphere, its center of origin is thought to be southeastern Europe. It is readily grown in the garden for annual color and its ethnobotanical value.

Its powers as a medicine are expectorant, sedative, antitussive and narcotic, though all are mild in action. The milky juice of the seedpod is known to posess narcotic virtues, though in very mild concentrations, making their extraction expensive. In folk medicine, several crushed seedheads are added to a topical balm to aid swollen joints and injured connective tissues. An infusion of 30 grams of the fresh leaves and flowers, has been used to calm violent coughs and other pulmonary upsets, and is a general sedative. The nectar of the red poppy's blossom is known to intoxicate bees. The plant contains the unique alkaloid rhoeadine, a mild sedative related to the family of morphine compounds.

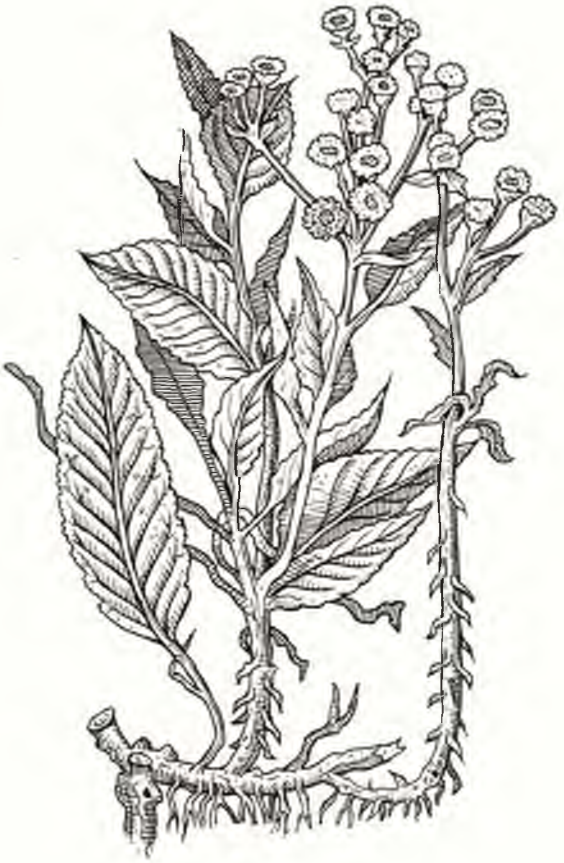
Poppy seeds have been discovered mixed in with corns of barley in relics dating from the Twelfth Egyptian dynasty, and the Romans associated the plant with the grain goddess Ceres, to whom they wove poppy garlands braided with wheat as fertility fetishes.

A Belarusian ritual for pacifying the restless dead requires the powers of the Corn Poppy; seeds of the plant were sprinkled about the exhumed corpse, which was dismembered and then re-buried; another variant of the charm from the same region merely scattered the seeds about the revenant's grave, house, and the churchyard.

A number of English legends forbid harvesting the plant for fear of assorted afflictions that may be roused, including blindness, earaches, warts, and being struck by lightning, hence an old popular name for the flower, 'Lightnings'.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Death, Funerary, Binding the Dead, Affliction.
Element: Water.
Planet: The Moon and Saturn.
Deific Forms: Ceres, Saturn.
Domain: Grainfield.
Virtues: Love, Resurrection.
Embodied State: Remembrance.
Body Part: Nerves.
Therapeutic: Palliation.
Affliction: Night Terrors.
Eponymous Compounds: rhoeadine—$C_{21}H_{21}NO_6$.
Emblem: An ancient war helmet, covered in blood, and sprouting ears of ripe grain.



COSTMARY

Tanacetum balsamita
Asteraceæ (Sunflower Family)

ALSO known as *Bible Leaf* for its folk use as a fragrant bookmark, Costmary is a perennial herb growing to 1 meter, with hirsute, silvery leaves and yellow flowers, native to Europe and West Asia, and naturalized in North America. The leaves and flowers exude a sharp, camphoraceous fragrance. Formerly classified in genus *Chrysanthemum*, Costmary is now regarded as being more closely related to Tansy. It also bore the traditional names of Alecost and Herb St.-Marie.

The herb is under the planetary dominions of Jupiter and Mercury, and its essence is best utilized through rites of purification and exorcism.

The Anglo-Saxon *Leechbook of Bald* gives a remedy against insanity containing Costmary, compounded with eight other herbs. Hildegard of Bingen remarked on its powers as a purgative, and its strength in resisting poison. Its occult properties are Purification, Exorcism, and Protection.

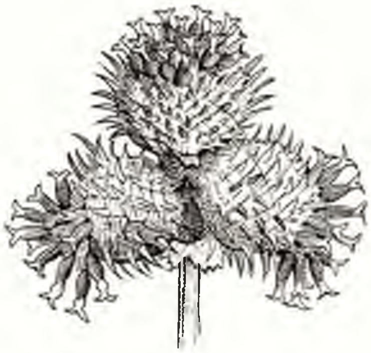
When magnified by the alchemical art, its aromatic virtues are as a searing knife-edge of green: bright, piercing and metallic. Remarkably vigorous for an herbaceous plant, its quintessence more resembles a tree resin than a low-growing herb. The odorous fraction, cleanly extracted into a hydrosol at even the most minute concentrations, maintains vitality for years. This perpetuity of vitality links it with its relative Tansy and its traditional funerary associations, as well as its powers against plague; it may likewise retain its aromatic foison dried, in sachet.

Harvest it with care: leaves and aerial portions are taken before flowering commences and are dried. Stems also retain great aromatic power, although their perfume differs both in complexity and strength from the leaves. Newly opened flowers also may be harvested and dried, bearing yet another narrowly refined fraction of the perfume of the leaf.

Containing scintillant notes of earth and minerals, and a slight spiciness, its power expresses a greener, more telluric expression of Camphor. Although it may be burnt in the form of incense its aromatic power is more readily expressed through extraction in liquid solvents, through a distilled hydrosol, or dried as sachet. Dried stems and twigs may also be used to kindle aromatic fires.

Costmary Wash.

❡Fill a 500 ml steeping vessel with dried Costmary leaves and stems, with 100 proof grain neutral spirit to cover. Seal and macerate for 14 days. Separate the liquor with an herb press, and bottle. Take the residual plant material and add to an alembic with 1.5 liter of wine, and an additional 100 grams of fresh Costmary leaves and stems. Distill, reserving 70 ml of the head and 30 ml of the heart, and add to the liquid from the first maceration. Let rest in a sealed vessel for 14 days, then strain and bottle. Use as a sprinkle for refreshment of the living quarters, rituals of purification, or as an invigorating skin tonic.



COSTUS

Saussurea costus

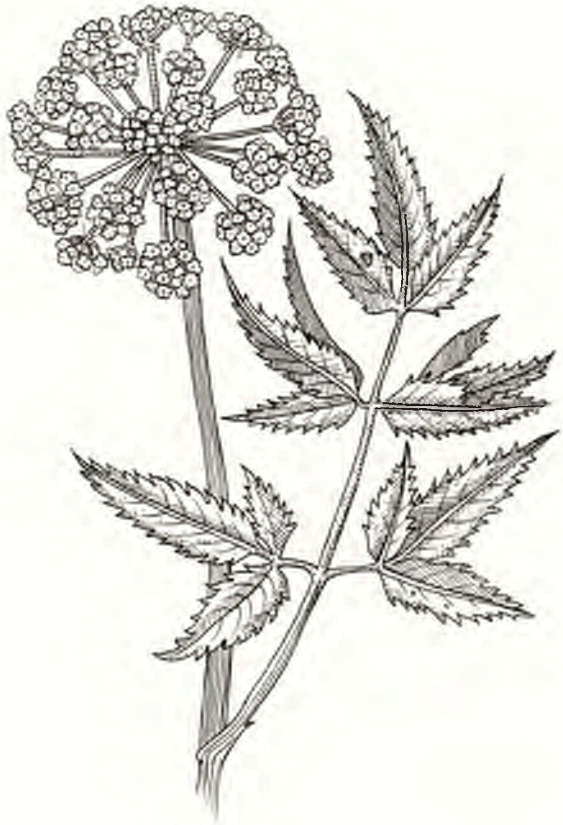
Asteraceæ (Sunflower Family)

COSTUS is a purple-flowered Asian shrub, endemic to the Indian Himalayas, growing to 2 meters in height. In appearance, its handsome blossom evokes the globose, spiked flowers of the Cynarae, the botanical tribe containing an abundance of Thistles, many of which are resinous. In previous taxonomies, it was known as *Sassurea lappa*. Known as *kuth* or *kostha*, the plant is cultivated for its fragrant root, prized for its musk-like scent when burned. Wild populations of the plant have been ravaged to the point of endangerment due to poaching and unethical trade practices and are now protected to some degree.

Its arresting fragrance epitomizes its power in subduing noxious influences. Because of this preternatural and woody spoor, Costus is of interest in perfumery as a non-zoological source for an animal musk simulacrum. As an aromatic, it boasts a long pedigree stretching back to biblical times and beyond, famed for its use in perfumed ointments. In traditional medicines, the root has been used to treat athsma, rheumatism, and chronic afflictions of the skin. Costus appeared as one ingredient in classical formulae for *theriaca*—the universal antidotes against poison which were part pharmaceutical, part talisman. In planetary correspondence, its resonance with the celestial bodies is complex, having attributes of Saturn (intoxication), Mars (demonifuge) and Venus (aphrodisiac). It rightly aligns with Terra, the classical element of Earth.

In Arabia, Saudi folk magic uses a preparation of Costus root powder and olive oil, dropped into the nasal cavity, to expel a particularly stubborn jinn possession, in which the spirit has lodged in the brain. In this sense, Costus may be considered an 'herb of bringing-back' or restoring the soul. The related species *Saussurea obvallata* and *S. gossypiphora*, also with intensely fragrant roots, are valued in India for protection against evil spirits, particularly in fumigations. There are numerous other species in the genus with allied physical, chemical and magical virtues.

The *Kama Sutra* prescribes a magical ointment containing Costus, Valerian, and Talisha Patra (*Flacourtia cataphracta*), and lampblack made from Aksha oil (*Terminalia bellerica*), gathered in a human skull. This balm, when rubbed on the body, is said to make a man irresisitable to women.



COWBANE

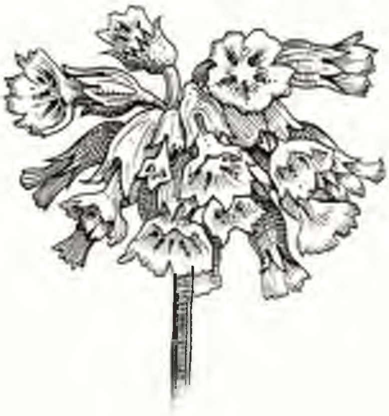
Cicuta spp. esp. *C. virosa* and *C. maculata*
Apiaceæ (Dill Family)

A VERITABLE minaret of poison, Cowbane is a perennial herb growing to 3 meters in height, haunting watery swamps and bogs, with hollow stems and small white umbellate flowers. There are 7 species in the Cowbane genus *Cicuta*, all found in the northern hemisphere; *C. virosa* is the species native to Europe. All are virulently poisonous. Though a relative of Poison Hemlock, it is far more toxic; there are several ways to distinguish between the two. The umbel of Cowbane is denser than that of Poison Hemlock; its odor distinctively resembles that of Celery and Parsley, and the stems bear no purple spots, as do *Conium maculatum*.

All parts of the plant are venomous; the portions involved in traditional folk use are the root, seed, and leaf. The chemical principle cicutoxin is a powerful nerve poison and occurs in all parts of the plant, but it is concentrated most virulently in the root. Few survive ingestion: the poison causes violent and painful convulsions so powerful that some people have been observed to bite through their tongues and break their teeth. Symptoms begin as soon as 15 minutes after ingestion and include severe cramping, nausea, hypersalivation, irregular heartbeat, delirium, spasms, and death within the hour.

Cowbane is obviously an herb of limited medical use, due to the potency of its poison, yet it was used by some Native American tribes for various ailments. The Paiute and Kawaiisu tribes recognized the root medicinally as an agent of suicide. As with so many other highly venomous plants, it was also used topically for muscle pains: the mashed root was spread over fire-heated stones and sore limbs laid directly over the pulp. Understandably, among the Kawaiisu there seems to have been a considerable taboo on touching the root. The Okanagan-Colville tribe, as well as the Klamath, employed the root, compounded with rattlesnake poison or decomposed animal liver, to poison arrows for warfare. A related species, *Cicuta douglasii*, was used by the Kwakiutl peoples as a purgative. In this capacity, a poultice of soaked roots was applied to the stomach. A poultice of the roots was also applied to the skin to extract thorns and splinters. Its powerful toxins were also appreciated in east Asia, particularly in Kamchatka, where the root was used as an arrow-poison.

Its traditional powers in magic are Death, Malevolence, Trickery, and Success in Hunting. In North America, the Ojibwa employed the root as a Hunting Medicine; it was smoldered to attract the buck deer near enough to shoot with bow and arrow. Relatives of kindred chemical composition have also been implicated as an ingredient in the ancient Witches' Flying Ointments, though eſtablishing taxonomy for the herb referred to in ancient recipes has proven difficult, and it is likely that less toxic umbellifers were used. Among the classic planetary powers, the herb is an emanation of Saturn, as is atteſted by its lethal force, and the low and boggy places in which it makes its home. It bears such common names as Children's Bane, Death-Of-Man, Musquash-Poison, Poison Parsnip, Scoots, and Water Hemlock.



COWSLIP

Primula veris

Primulaceæ (Primrose Family)

A VISUALLY diminutive herb with basal rosetting leaves, similar in many respects to Primrose, but with yellow, funnel-shaped blossoms on taller, more slender ſtalks. In the wild Cowslip prefers damp soils with heavy clay, but it can also fare well in the garden. Some varieties are powerfully aromatic, their scent at once enlivening, entrancing, and myſtifying.

The fresh flowers and leaves are the parts used; in folk medicine, Cowslip has been reckoned as a sedative, mild narcotic and nervine. The virtues of the leaves are also harnessed in certain creams and unguents for tonifying and preserving skin. An infusion of leaves, using 30 grams one half liter of boiling water, may be concocted as needed for calmative properties. The roots of some Alpine varieties were used as a preventative againſt altitude sickness.

It may be used to produce a delightful mead or cordial, a draught whose aroma fills the head and gives forth the breath of spring meadows. Commercial varieties, when they can be found, are generally of a moderate ſtrength, so as not to offend, nor unduly ſtupefy the drinker. The alternative, to demonſtrate both a superior ſtrength of the medicine, as well as the blossom's fragrance, is to grow the plant and make one's own wine. The benefits of the flowers may be captured in a half-bottle of brandy, by gradual addition of fresh blossoms until the whole breathes a sweet and enticing aroma; ſtrained and kept bottled, it makes a fine sedative, and serve as a bridge to communion with the flower.

It is accorded the governance of Venus, and the Element of Water. The flower's resemblance to keys has nurtured the association with St. Peter in German folklore, and the flowers are regarded as having the powers to open locks, doors, caskets, or otherwise reveal what is hidden.

English folklore relates that it is a plant much beloved of fairies, who take shelter in Cowslip blossoms during rainſtorms, in alignment with its common name Fairy Cups, suggeſtive of the elfin powers they contain. In other traditions, charms woven of Cowslip flowers were used to keep fairies away.

In Somerset, flowers were woven by youngſters into a divinatory sphere known as a Tiſty-toſty, thrown to predict, among other things, the virtue and character of a future husband.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF COWSLIP

Revelation, Repose, Captivation, Caritas, Perplexity, Windfall, Disencumbrance, Quiet Wardship, Ethereal Scent, Fleeting Voices, Sacred Enclosures, Fleshly Virtue, Reſtored Youth.

COYOTE'S HAIR LICHEN

Ramalina menziesii

Ramalinaceæ

A LACY, filamentous pale green tree lichen associated with foreſts in California, where it is often seen draped from from trees such as Coaſt Live Oak (*Quercus agrifolia*). Its trailing, hairlike appearance and ethereal refraction of light lends an eldritch splendor to the woodlands where it is flourishes. It is not to be confused with Beard Lichen (*Usnea* spp.) another lichen it superficially resembles.

Known and used in Native American magic, among the Kawaiisu peoples it was known as *paazimo'ora* and was one of the most powerful herbs for weather-sorcery, with a long and venerable history for summoning rain. The lichen must be gathered directly from the tree; that which has touched the ground is ineffective. The lichen is sprinkled with water, or, alternatively, placed in a vessel of water in the morning. By nightfall the same day, rain would come. In at least one reported instance, the herb was used to drive away lightning and thunder, by placing it in a fire.

COYOTILLO

Karwinskia humboldtiana

Rhamnaceæ (Buckthorn Family)

A HANDSOME evergreen shrub growing to 1.5 meters, endemic to semi-arid areas of South Texas and Northern Mexico. The plant has deep green leaves, an insipid pale green flower, and spherical berries ripening from yellow green to reddish brown, to glossy black. In appearance, the plant bears some resemblance to Coffee Berry (*Rhamnus californica*) and another similar rhamnaceous shrubs though it is distinguished for its strong medicinal power, and in particular the poisonous fruit.

Coyotillo's venomous nature, together with its lineage emergent from the Buckthorns, aligns it with the planetary powers of Saturn. This toxicity is well established in scientific literature and the testimony of folklore, and children and livestock are common victims. The seed causes ascending paralysis beginning in the limbs, seizures, collapse of liver function, and death. The active principles are the nerve-poisons peroxisomicine and tullidinol. Some who survive poisoning are left quadriplegic. The plant is so named because coyotes—as well as other animals—know to eat the fruit without crushing the toxic seed; among many other names, it is also christened *tullidora* ('paralyzer').

Despite its strong toxicity, the tree is an important Tarahumara ethnobotanical, and infusions of the plant are used in purification ceremonies. Its wood is valued for arrow shafts, and its pulverized bark as a febrifuge tisane. The leaf infusion was also used against fevers in Mexican folk magic.

CUBEB

Piper cubeba

Piperidaceæ (Pepper Family)

CUBEB makes its home within the genus *Piper*, which contains a great medicinal and magical plants including Kava Kava (*P. methysticum*) and Black Pepper (*P. nigrum*). It is a shrubby, perennial vine growing to 6 meters, with ovate leaves and pale green flower-spikes. The fruits, which express the greatest concentration of the plant's power, are densely clustered green berries which become yellow on ripening. It is native to India and Indonesia, where it has long been cultivated as a spice. It may be grown in temperate climates, but a greenhouse is essential, as the plant is tropical.

For those enthralled by Black Pepper, acquaintance with the Cubeb is essential, for it provides a direct lesson in how a single botanical genus may evolve equally compelling powers in two subtly different species. Used as a culinary spice, perfuming and in medicine, it was once popular in Europe. The word *Cubeb* may refer to the plant, or to its fruits, for which it is grown.

Prior to use, the seed is crushed to liberate the aromatic principles. *Oleum Cubebo*, the essential oil, is obtained from the fruit by distillation. Cubeb essential oil contains a high concentration of the monoterpene sabinene ($C_{10}H_{16}$), also present in Juniper. Indeed, though different in their aromatic profiles, the fruits two may serve similar roles in cuisine, adding a distinctive warm, lively spice. Likewise, it may be used sparingly in the preparation of bitters. Its aromatic nature is warming, pungent and arousing; the essential oil is an excellent addition to massage oil formulae and blends well with balsamic oils such as Frankincense.

Cubeb's array of chemical particulars support its traditional use as an aphrodisiac, stimulant, diuretic, and aperitif. In folk medicine, it has long been valued for its inclusion in oral hygiene regimens, both for cleansing and stimulating the gums, and freshening the breath. In scientific studies the fruits have demonstrated antibacterial activity against several harmful pathogens such as *Salmonella typhi*, *Streptococcus pyogenes*, and *Ralstonia solanacearum*. Aromatized waters of

Cubeb were in former times used as a refresher or reviver, against faintings.

As with many *Piper* species, the herb is ruled by Mars, but given its aphrodisiac attributions, it also possesses Venusian attributes. The Hindi expression *kabāb-hōna*, to burn, or to be desperately in love, evokes the seed's flaming ardor, yet also signifies 'to be enraged'. Some traditional aphrodisiac preparations combine Cubebs and Opium; one Unani medicinal formula is compounded from a stimulating paste of the ground seeds, and rubbed on both male and female genitals. This modality makes use of rubefaction, the vigorous rubbing of the stimulating herb on the organs of generation potentiating the pleasures of coitus. The fruits have also been utilized in Voodoo lust and attraction spells, as well as concupiscent Hoodoo magic cast to attract paramours. As it is both aromatic and resistant to bacteria, it also serves as a natural filling-material for witches' poppets and love-fetishes.

CUDWEED

Gnaphalium spp.
Asteraceæ (Sunflower family)

CUDWEED refers to any of the 125 species populating the genus *Gnaphalium*, being low-growing annual plants characterized by woolly or downy leaves, often populating dry, open ground. Many species are commonly given the name 'Everlasting', owing to their propensity for quick drying and preservation over time. Pliny called the Cudweed of his era *Chamæzelon*; much of the former taxonomy of *Gnaphalium* has been reclassified, with species moved into such genera as *Anaphalis* and *Pseudognaphalium*.

Cudweeds have some folk medical esteem, being used topically for drawing sores and for bruises. They are also favored medicines for pulmonary aliments such as asthma, and as such are smoked, or drunk in decoction.

Cudweed species have a peculiar aroma when dried, and also when burned. Despite worldwide distribution, Cudweeds share a common ritual usage as suffumigants, owing in part to their downy, tightly packed floral parts and carbonaceous leaves which readily yield fragrant smoke when burned. In North America, Indian Posy (*G. polycephalum*) was smoked for pleasure and used as a ritual smudge to drive away ghosts, and to revive those who have fainted. Deployed by blowing the smoke directly in the nostrils, some versions of his reviving incense used beaver gall as an admixture. Some Cudweeds are also used as perfumes in sachets or potpourri.

CUMIN

Cuminum cyminum
Apiaceæ (Dill Family)

AN annual herb native to the Mediterannean, growing to 50 cm in height, with dark green foliage and umbel inflorescences of white or pink flowers. The spice is derived from the small brown seed, which has been in human use for over three millennia. The scent of the spice is warm, earthy, savory and balsamic; it is this aromatic profile which readily identifies its presence in curries and *garam malsala*. Fresh leaves and flowers are also fragrant, and the seed may be used unripe, fresh or dried.

Medicinally, Cumin is carminative, aromatic, stomachic, astringent, and stimulant. Like other allied Apiaceae, the plant is used as an aphrodisiac, and its unripe fruits have been used traditionally as a uterine stimulant and abortifacient. In African folk medicine, the ground seeds are used as a snuff as a cure for headache.

> The herb was thought to specially confer the gift of retention, preventing the theft of any object which contained it, and holding the thief in custody within the invaded house; also keeping fowls and pigeons from straying, and lovers from proving fickle. If a swain was going off as a soldier, or to work a long way from his home, his sweetheart would give him a loaf seasoned with Cumin, or a cup of wine in which some of the herb had been mixed.
>
> WILLIAM THOMAS FERNIE
> *Herbal Simples Approved for*
> *Modern Uses of Cure*, 1897

In planetary and astrological magic, Cumin is a plant of Venus, and its element is Fire. Its uses in magic and ritual are Allure, Fertility, Harmony and Protection. Cumin seed has been used by women in diverse charms ensure the fidelity of their lovers or husbands. Sprigs of the fresh plant are worn to ensure success, and as protection from *maleficia*.

The seed is also strewn to cleanse a room of evil spirits. In Algeria, the Shawiya Berbers use bundles of Cumin seed (*kamoun*) as talismans to keep away the jenoun or jinn, and against other evil spiritual influences such as the Evil Eye.

CURRANT

Ribes spp.
Grossulariaceæ (Currant Family)

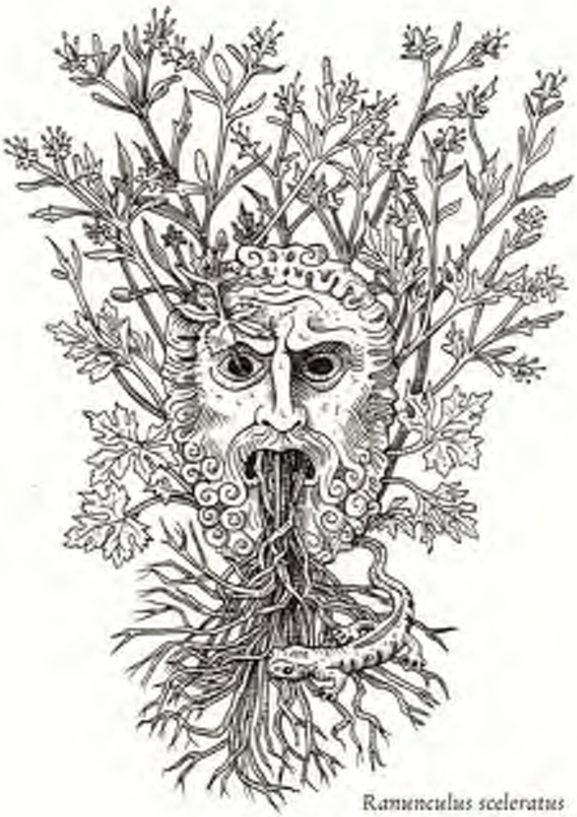
THE genus *Ribes* comprises the true currants, consisting of about 130 individual species mostly inhabiting temperate zones of the northern hemisphere, with several also indigenous to South America. Most are small deciduous shrubs, and many have spines or prickles. Their relation to humankind has been driven by their edible fruits, their use in ornamental horticulture, as well as medicine and magic; as a whole, the genus is governed by correspondence with Jupiter, it is magical essence is protective, sustaining, and, as manifest in Gooseberry (*Ribes uva-crispa*), allied with revelatory power, or divination.

An abundance of *Ribes* species are found in North America, and some feature in ceremonial use amongst its indigenous peoples. The Iroquois used a bark-decoction of Wild Black Currant (*Ribes americanum*) and the Eastern Wild Gooseberry (*R. rotundifolium*) for divination, while the Orange Gooseberry (*Ribes pinetorum*) has been employed as a ceremonial emetic by the Ramah Navajo. Among the Xwsenəc people of British Columbia, a powerful wash compounded from the roots of both Prickly Currant (*Ribes lacustre*) and Wild Cherry was used to bathe newborn infants 'for intelligence and obedience'.

CURSED BUTTERCUP

Ranunculus sceleratus
Ranunculaceæ (Buttercup Family)

KNOWN as Cursed Crowfoot or Biting Crowfoot, Cursed Buttercup is the most venomous Buttercup in the genus *Ranunculus*, which contains over 400 different species. A plant of Mars and Saturn, its prime virtue in folk medicine is as an escharotic, being a medicine which is used to produce blisters on the skin. The specific name *sceleratus*, meaning 'evil', recalls the Campus Sceleratus or 'Evil Field' of ancient Rome, an underground chamber where criminals were buried alive; the herb was also known as Sardonia. We note as chief amongst its magical powers, the virtues of Wrath, Trickery, Protection, and Madness.



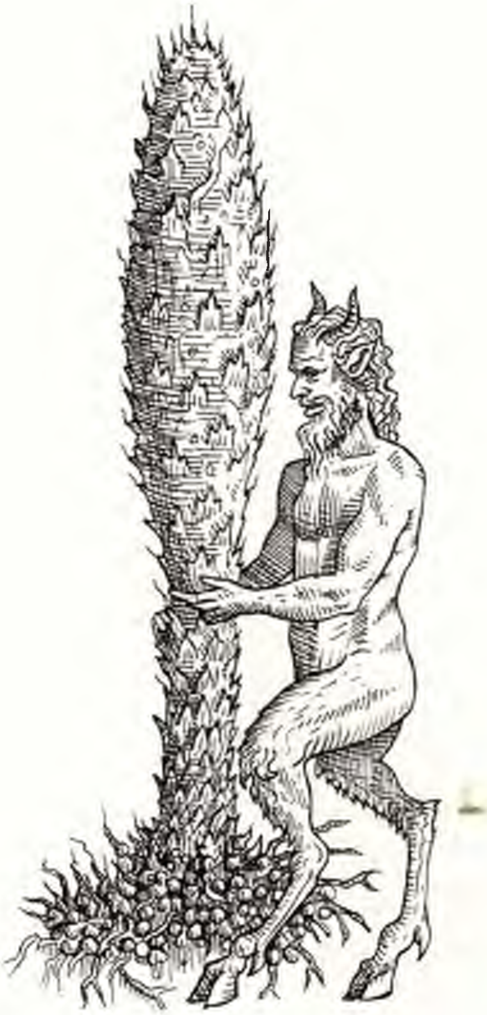
Ranunculus sceleratus

Admittedly, the plant is a curiosity for the poisoner of morbid humor. The venomous sap and roots contain ranunculin, a toxic glycoside, giving rise to protoanemonin, an irritant and vesicant of the skin and mucous membranes. George Don, in his *A General System of Gardening and Botany* (1831–7) reports: 'The bruised herb is said to raise a blister, which is not easily healed, and by which strolling beggars sometimes excite compassion.' The Thompson tribe of North America used both the blossom and parts of the plant as arrow poison.

Pliny warned that persons who ate the baneful blossom would laugh themselves to death. Similarly, the medieval Italian physician Pietro Mattioli mentions a ranunculaceous plant of diabolic character, one *Apium Risum* or Laughing Celery, so named because folklore relates that those who ate of it died laughing. The buttercup in question allegedly gave rise to a nervous spasm, which, after the death of the unfortunate who had eaten the plant, caused the mouth to retract in a ghoulish manner.

The Spirit-Retinue of Cursed Buttercup

Vexation, Friction, Torridity, Aggravation,
Empustulation, Effrontery, Dermographia,
Wounding, Wildfire, Scabbing, Caustic
Agony, Fleshly Cavitation,
and Aggrieved Misery.



CYNOMORIUM

Cynomorium spp.

HIGHLY prized among medieval Arab physicians, Cynomorium is a holoparasite on brooms and amaranths inhabiting arid and sodic soils, characterized by a red ithyphallic inflorescence, later turning black. Within Arabia, it is called Tarathith, or Tarthuth: the so-called 'Treasure of Poisons' of the ancient apothecaries. Although not a mushroom, it nevertheless also bears the common name *Fungus Melitensis*. The Asian species C. *songaricum* is known as Suoyang. *Cynomorium* is the sole genus in the plant family Cynomoriaceae. Presently its conservation status in Europe is vulnerable.

The plant came to European renown in the 16th century due to its Maltese population, whose protection and trafficking was rigidly controlled by the Catholic military order the Knights of Malta. Medicinally it was used as a tonic for the genito-urinary system with especial emphasis on male potency and libido, primiarily because of its distinctive morphology and resonance in the Doctrine of Signatures. In addition to its aphrodisiac uses, Cynomorium has also been used as a stypic and a contraceptive. References in Ibn Wahshiya's *Book of Poisons* cite the plant as an essential ingredient in several preparations of Theriac, the anti-venom tonic. It is a proven nutritive, having enjoyed a history as a famine food, and its inner flesh is edible and sweet. A red colorfast pigment called *dami* is traditionally derived from the plant.

CYCLAMEN

Cyclamen spp.

Primulaceæ (Primrose Family)

WITH an otherworldly appearance evoking both færie and creatures of the primordial deep, the perennial Cyclamen is diminutive in stature, growing to 15 cm in height, but emanating a formidable presence. It is a shade-dwelling plant with variegated, cordate leaves, and a large, circular tuber, valued in horticulture for their unusual floral display, typically colored in shades of white, pink, purple or red. The genus contains at least 23 species; the Cyclamen europaeum so widely cited for its magical properties in older works is now recognized as three distinct species, C. *purpurascens*, C. *hederifolium*, and C. *repandum*. There is also a body of ethnobotanical lore associated with C. *persicum*, a species common to the Mediterranean. Its original Greek name, kyklāmīnos, is thought to be derived from kýklos (κύκλος) meaning 'circle', a likely reference to the compass of its round tuber. Since antiquity Cyclamen has borne a multitude of descriptive common names, including Artanitha, Chelonion, Tuber Terrae, Sow-Bread, and Cock of the Mountain.

Cyclamen is easily grown in the garden, and with its otherworldly form is an attractive specimen among magico-medicinal plant collections. Commercial cultivars are, however, susceptible to the corrupting influences of botrytis, which can bring destruction to the entire plant. To keep Cyclamen plants healthy, do not overwater, and remove the entire pedicel, or flower-stalk, after flowers have reached their peak.

In various magical traditions, it has been ascribed the powers of protection, allure and as a love charm. The seeds, as reported by Dioscorides, had the power to disrupt witchcraft and maledictive force. Pliny the Elder remarked of Cyclamen that "It ought be grown in every house, if it be true that wherever it grows noxious spells can have no effect. This plant is also called an amulet." The European Cyclamen known as Bleeding Nun was used as a charm against foul weather.

Theophrastus reported that the root steeped in wine had a stupefying effect and was also a valuable additive to love potions. Given its morphology and similarity to the aphrodisiac tubers of Orchid, it is likely he referred to the swollen tubers. In more recent times, the root has been used as a vermifuge and cathartic; the tuber contains the toxic and bitter triterpenoid glycoside cyclamin, $C_{58}H_{94}O_{27}$. Cyclamin has been developed as a molluscicide against snails serving as hosts for the parasitic flatworm which infests humans, causing the devastating disease schistosomiasis. This would appear a curious manifestation of the plant's power, given its reputation as an aphrodisiac and the goddess Aphrodite's association with sea molluscs. Yet the proximity of aphrodisiacs to poisons is perpetual, as is that of winsome beauty to lethality, as we are taught by the Venus Flytrap.

In Syrian folk magic, from Christmas Day to twelve days after, the plant is used in a money-drawing ritual. Unleavened dough is bound in a calico wrapper with money and a ring of Cyclamen roots and hung on a tree. Each morning the bundle is immersed in a pure spring, bringing good fortune, and perhaps, the fermentation of the dough.

CYMBOPOGON

Cymbopogon spp.
Poaceæ (Grass Family)

VARIOUS species of this aromatic grass are used as insecticides, and in traditional botany they are burned as fumigants for this purpose, while more modern pest control strategies use the extracted oils. Citronella oil is extracted from various species of *Cymbopogon*. Aromatic *Cymbopogon* species enjoy traditions of being burned or smoldered as a fumigant, as many of the complex aromas of the plant remain true in its expressed smoke.

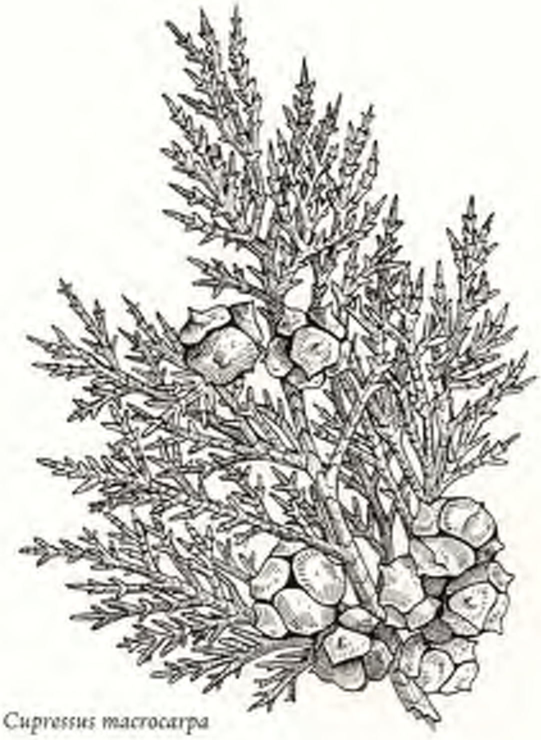
Tanzanian shamans smoked the flowers of C. *densiflorus*, sometimes alone, or with Tobacco or Kanna (*Sceletium tortuosum*) to induce prophetic dreams of visions. In North Africa camel grass (C. *schoenanthus*) was burned against noxious influence known as *ahon*. Together with Tobacco, Cymbopogon species are used in Nigeria as a fumigant for sick livestock. Iwarancusa grass (C. *jwarancusa*) was used as a traditional incense in Pakistan to drive away demons. In the United States, this species is now an invasive in Florida, unsurprising given the plant's ease of distrubition, hardiness and the preference of the genus for warm temperate and tropical climates.

Lemon Grass (*Cymbopogon citratus*), also called Fever Grass, is a perennial, tropical aromatic grass growing to 2 meters, forming aggregate clusters. It seldom flowers, as it has a long history as a cultigen. It is cultivated as the source of commercial Oil of Lemon Grass, and as a spice. As used in magic and ritual, its powers are Protection from Maleficia, Attraction, Allure and Exorcism. The fragrant rhizomes may be pounded into incenses for operations of Allure, and for the realization of fleshly desires. It is also a valued plant in the African American magical tradition of Hoodoo, which esteems it for its purity in exorcism and charms of Allure.

CYPRESS

Cupressus spp.
Cupressaceæ (Cypress Family)

THE genus *Cupressus* contains twenty species of evergreen conifer native to temperate regions of the Northern Hemisphere. From ancient times the trees have been esteemed for their dense and fragrant wood, and for their funerary symbolism, as well as being a significant tree of horticulture, with many diverse cultivars. According to Ovid, Cypress is named for Kyparissos, a boy loved by Apollo, who metamorphosed into the tree because of his grief at having slaughtered a sacred stag. In antiquity, *C. funebris* was sacred to Pluto.



Cupressus macrocarpa

Generally, its planetary resonance is ascribed to Saturn, due to its embrace of the corpse: but its heart is active, transmutative, and conductive, and thus aligned with Hermes Psychopompos and the retinue of Mercury. Because the Cypress tree grows in windy places and is often shaped by the wind, it has a strong affinity with wind spirits and air in general. Its constellation of magical essences includes Exorcism, Remembrance and Mourning, Healing, and Longevity. The tree is associated with graveyards, both Christian and Muslim, where it is planted to ease the passage of the soul and temper the putrefaction of the body. This alliance is ancient, but the tradition exhibits strong endurance in modern cemeteries.

Certain other trees outside the genus *Cupressus* are commonly called 'Cypress,' and until recent taxonomic reclassification diven by genetic phylogeny, some occupied the True Cypress genus. These include such genera as *Chamaecyparis*, *Neocupressus* and *Hesperocyparis*. Recent scientific classification advocates for placing Tecate Cypress (*C. forbesii*) and the vulnerable Modoc Cypress (*C. bakeri*) in *Hesperocyparis*, but the morphological and energetic differences between these and true Cypresses are, for esoteric consideration, negligible. Another powerful species, native to northern Mexico, is the turquoise-leaved Arizona Cypress (*Cupresssus arizonica*), often planted in xerophytic landscaping north of the border.

Wood, leaves, and cones are all fragrant in varying degrees. The graceful leaves, quickly and easily dried, retain their virtues for the better part of a year. Depending on species, the dried green leaves and twigs exhibit true aromatic expressions when burned. Brown leaves, naturally exhausted of their chlorophyll, retain some aromatic characteristics even in the face of death, and can thus be used as a carbonaceous basis for incense, with other fragrant plant materials added. This virtue testifies to its strong power of vitality and endurance: though the tree was linked to death in many Mediterranean cultures, the ancient Persians regarded it as a totem of eternal life. Unripe fruits and pollen-cones are highly aromatic and may be incorporated into incenses, wines, and powders, but caution is advised as their presence may overpower a preparation.

The greatest concentration of aroma lies in the yellow resin and its various distilled fractions, being particularly pure products for aromatic usage. Resin can be obtained from natural seeps and may be collected without wounding the tree. Its scent when burned is woody, balsamic, citrus, acrid, and permeated with the savor of pinenes, linking it with its phylogenic cousin Sandarac; the wood proffers a balsamic odor suggestive of nobility, ancient cults, and theurgy. Spherical cones, when gathered, will split upon drying, and shatter seeds.

The local cliffside and dune forests of the California Central Coast are dominated in many locales by the iconic Monterey Cypress (*Cupressus macrocarpa*). In these wind-sculpted woods, thick trunks of older individuals may grow horizontally more than vertically, at times forming thick multiple trunks that sprawl along the ground. As individual trees intertwine over the decades, they may form dense and fragrant labyrinths redolent of an arboreal underworld, amid which one may wander in reverie. Here, amid the branches, shadows, and shifting rays of sunlight, the eye may perchance glimpse the forms of wood-spirits, or, in the alignment of branches, the primordial alphabet of the trees. This mesmerizing optical peculiarity recalls the spiritual diaries of the Elizabethan magus John Dee, in which it is reported that an apparition is glimpsed in a scrying stone "not perfectly to be seen, but as if he were to be seen through a Cipresse."

Ancient Coptic spells invoking Isis burned Cypress for the aid of the goddess in divination. Wands of Cypress wood are used for communion with the chthonic spirit retinue, traditionally by summoning them at crossroads. The heavy, fragrant, durable wood was employed to carve statues of gods and goddesses for Greek temples.

In ancient Greece, the grove of Cypresses on the Acropolis at Phlius was a sanctuary for criminals and fugitives from justice. Once in the protection of the grove, they were legally inviolable. There the ex-convicts made a practice of hanging their shackles upon the trees.

The Spirit-Retinue of Cypress

Ascesis, Quietude, Melancholy, Steadfastness, Sinistrality, Foreboding, Woe, Embodied Memory, Spectral Vapor, Prophetic Fire, Sepulchral Gloom, Fleshly Restoration & Verdant Effusion.

In his monumental work *De praestigiis daemonum* (1583), Johann Weyer relays a spell utilizing Cypress to identify and injure a thief. A series of incantations is first made, beginning with the seven penitential psalms, then the Litany of Saints, followed by a 'frightening prayer to God the Father and Christ', and finally an exorcism against the thief. A magic circle (a sympathetic fetish representing the thief's eye) is inscribed with barbarous words, then a triangular bronze nail is consecrated and driven into the center of this circle with a cypress mallet, the sorcerer saying, "You are just Oh Lord, and just are your judgments." The thief is revealed by his screaming, and by his damaged or missing eye.

Giordano Bruno associated the Tree with Saturn, for the planet's Fourth Image in *De umbris idearum* is that of a dark man having the feet of a camel, seated upon a Winged Dragon and bearing a Cypress branch in his dextral hand.

Dr. Thomas Campion recorded an English knotting-charm, a portion of which invokes the dread tree's power:

Go burn these poisonous weeds in yon blue fire,
These screech-owl feathers and this prickling briar;
This cypress gathered at a dead man's grave;
That all thy fears and cares, an end may have.

Funerary Incense.

2 parts Cypress wood, shaved fine
1 part dried twig tips, broken
1 part resin, tears

❡ A loose incense for burning on embers or charcoal, the entirety of the formulation emanates from the same tree, the better to magnify it singular powers. The wood used should not be bark, but rather the dense, fragrant wood from the interior of the branches. The entirety of the dried portions is blended and stored in an airtight container until needed. The incense may be occasionally refreshed with several drops of essential oil of Cypress.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Purification, Funerary, Revelation, Longevity.
Virtue: Perseverance.
Element: Air.
Planet: Saturn.
Deific Forms: Isis, Asklepios.
Domain: Graveyard.
Affliction: Stasis.
Therapeutic: Hermitage.
Medicine: Antimicrobial.
Emblem: A rustic head carved into an ancient wooden door, from whose mouth green leaves emerge.

DAMAR

DAMAR or *dammar* is a resin obtained from trees in India, Indonesia and the Pacific Islands, harvested on maturation and transformed into lacquers and varnish. Some of this resin is sold in raw form for incense purposes. The Damar resin of commerce is most often white or transparent with a frosted surface, and when burned it produces a fragrance with strong citrus and balsamic notes. Its principal magical use as an incense is associated with rituals of purification and expulsion of evil spirits; it may also be used as an adjunct to healing, meditation and for heightening mental acuity. Commercial Damar is also obtained from the resins of many different trees, among them the following:

MANILA COPAL. *Agathis dammara* (Araucariaceæ). Producing an odoriferous gum known as Cat Eye Resin, this tree is native to the Philippines and the Moluccas, belonging to one of the most ancient families of conifers. The species has undergone repeated taxonomic revision.

BLACK DAMMAR. *Canarium strictum* (Burseraceæ). A member of the aromatic Torchwood Family, the tree has impeccable botanical pedigree in the realm of fragrance and incenses. It thrives in India, and its potent smoke has been used in ethnomedicine as an insect repellent.

WHITE MERANTI. *Shorea javanica* (Dipterocarpaceæ). An Indonesian species producing a clear, pale yellow resin. Although fragrant, much of the farmed or managed crop of the tree is exported for the production of varnishes. Flammable as well as aromatic, it was traditionally used as a fuel for torches.

SAL TREE. *Shorea robusta* (Dipterocarpaceæ). The tree is native to India where it is wide ranging and has many important spiritual correspondences in Hinduism and Buddhism. Its resin has ancient esteem as an aromatic incense, used especially in Hindu ritual and as a healing adjunct to medicine, where it used for fumigating sickrooms.

TA-KHIAN. *Hopea odorata* (Dipterocarpaceæ). A critically endangered tree of India and Southeast Asia long harvested for timber, it has provided some of the 'Damar' resin of commerce. Thai traditions have long recognized the presence of a governing genius, the Lady of Ta-khian, a tutelary spirit residing within the tree.

DARNEL

Lolium temulentum

Poaceæ (Grass Family)

AN aberrant shadow of Ceres, poisonous Darnel emerges from the Grass family, the great botanical matrix of the grain crops of Eurasia. Adapted to the same culture as Wheat, from times of earliest farming it infiltrated fields, and its gray, bitter seed had to be manually separated from the harvest. Even so, flour was often contaminated, and bread from it was known to produce dizzying stupefaction when eaten.

It is a grass resembling Rye in some respects, with dark gray or purple grains, growing to 1 meter in height, with cosmopolitan distribution. In countries with large scale industrialized agriculture, Darnel infestation is rare.

Darnel firmly occupies the principalities of Saturn, allied to his governance of derangement, infestation, sterility and poisoning. It is also intimately linked with the Saturnian practice of agriculture, both in terms of its preferred grain hosts, and the additional toil required to separate it from wholesome grains.

Darnel was a possible constituent of the malign 'Black Breads' purportedly served at the Witches' Sabbat, and which caused such outrage to Pierre DeLancre in his exhaustive inquisitional work of 1612 *On the Inconstancy of Witches*. He reported an abhorrent and stupefying bread, black in color, bitter in taste, that was used by witches in the rites. It represented all that was opposed to the sanctity of the white communion host, a kind of 'black sacrament' of witchcraft. When ingested, Darnel provokes confusion, inebriation, loss of motor control, and delirium, symptoms which resonate with the ecstasies of the Witches' Sabbat.

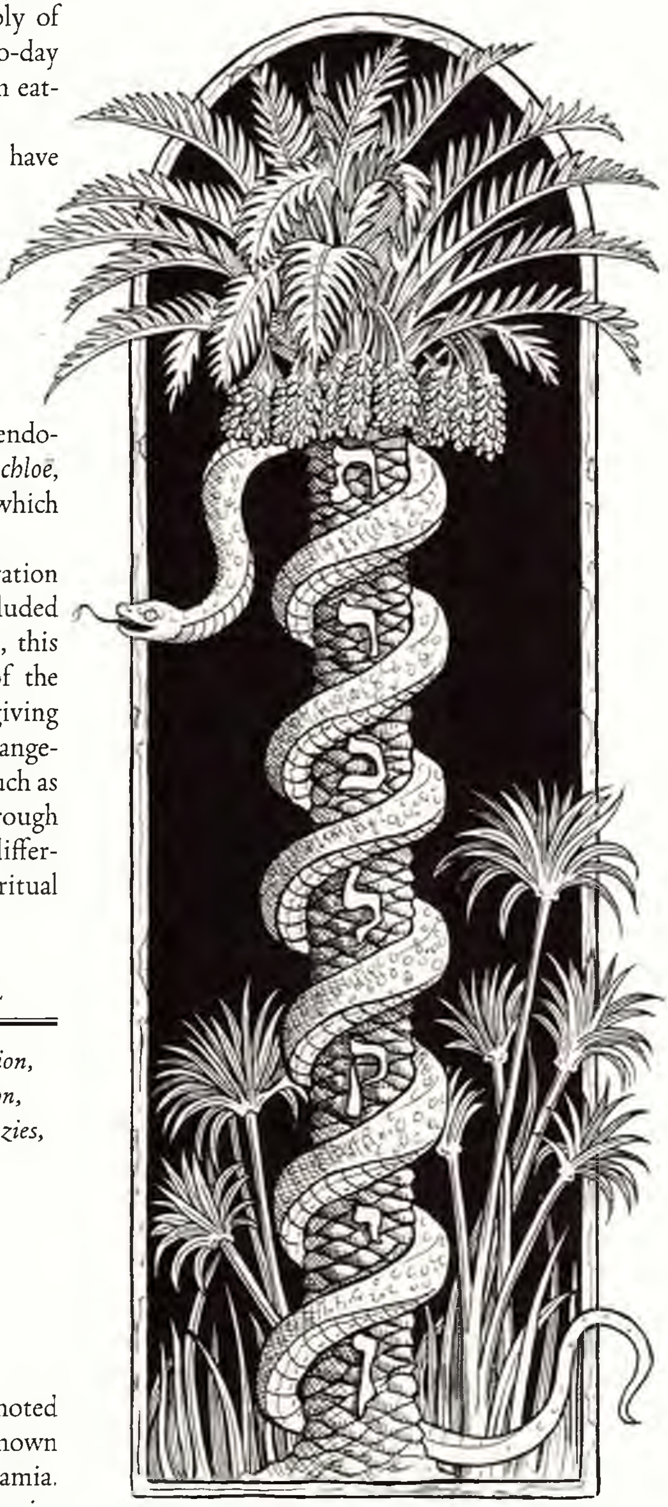
Historian Piero Camporesi's 1980 work *Bread* *of Dreams* explored the effects of such grain contaminants as Darnel on the food supply of medieval Europe, positing a sustained day-to-day state of delirium among poorer classes from eating corrupt breads.

The intoxicating properties of Darnel have been well known for centuries, as it was one of several herbs deliberately to spike beer in order to increase its stupefying potentials. Gerard testified to its disorienting power in his *Herball* of 1597, noting that bread containing Darnel provoked drunkenness. *Lolium* intoxication arises not from the grass itself but from the presence of an endophytic ascomycete fungus of the genus *Epichloë*, related to Ergot (*Claviceps purpurea*), from which LSD was first synthesized.

In its esotery, Darnel embodies infiltration by the alien other, those sinister grains excluded from the entitled paradigm. In agriculture, this principle is manifest in the subversion of the harvest, and the undermining of its health-giving power. As relating to the body, it is the derangement of thought and bodily activity. Inasmuch as such states proffer disruption, they also, through the altered viewpoints they impose, offer differing perspectives which can be powerful spiritual catalysts.

The Spirit-Retinue of Darnel

Raving, Enfeeblement, Torpidity, Contamination, Vitiation, Paroxysm, Adulteration, Disruption, Diplopia, Jejune Murmurings, Centrifugal Frenzies, Perverse Spasms, and Brutal Ravishment.



Date Palm

Phoenix dactylifera

Palmaceæ (Palm Family)

A PALM growing to 22 meters in height, noted for its arching fronds and sweet fruits, known as dates, thought to be native to Mesopotamia. The genus *Phoenix* contains 14 accepted species of date-producing palms, of which *P. dactylifera* is the chief one under cultivation. The portions used in commerce and magical operations are the sap, fruits, fronds, and pits.

Sugary sap is tapped for fermenting palm wine and beer, which enjoyed widespread appreciation in antiquity; its brewing in mass quantities was well established at the time of Herodotus. In ancient Sumer, cuneiform texts reveal that Palm wine was used as a temple offering. Stored in casks of palm wood, this valued libation was ferried up and down rivers as a major trade item. Whether or not other herbs were added to the wine, as was later popular in the region, is not at present known. Date Wine is a mild purgative.

An inherent holiness attends upon the tree and is expressed by its stately form, branches, and fruit. In some cases, this power was interpreted as health-giving virtue. In the ritual corpus of ancient Ugarit, the fruit stalk of the Date Palm was used to ritually banish snake poison. The Greeks associated the tree with Apollo, at least one Roman monument identifies the forest god Sylvanus with the Palm. In medieval European magic, it was considered to afford protection against sunstrike and lightning.

Some Judaeo-Christian traditions hold that the Tree of Knowledge in the Garden of Eden was a Date Palm. Islamic lore relates that Allah created it for the believers and the Faithful, and that when Adam was expelled from the Garden, he took with him a sprig of Myrtle, a grain of Wheat, and the Date, which was considered the most regal of fruits. In his *al-Futuhat al-makiyyah*, Ibn Arabi compared the semen ejaculated by the *jinni* to the pollen of the Palm tree.

The Spirit-Retinue of Date Palm

Dominion, Robustness, Radiance, Virility, Fructification, Ascension, Expansion, Procreation,
Predomination, Sanctuary, Celestial
Dispensation, Sanctified
Action, and Divine
Sustenance.

The Date Palm carries important associations with death, the afterlife, and immortality, and played important roles in funerary ritual. Priests of ancient Egypt washed the abdominal cavities of the corpses with Date Palm wine prior to mummification. Dates were also buried with ancient Egyptian rulers, and the pit of the fruit carries an ancient association with Anubis, judge of the dead. *The Leyden Papyrus*, that venerable Book of old Egyptian sorceries, contains a formula for an incense of Anubis, containing Frankincense, Styrax, Wax, turpentine, and Date-stones ground in Wine, rolled into a ball and smoldered on a fire or brazier. Ancient Christians believed that the souls of their martyrs were borne aloft from the tortures of flame and rack by angels bearing Palm branches.

The Palm is accorded great *baraka* in Islam, where it also serves an important mortuary function. In Palestine, its branches are carried in the funeral procession, and placed over the grave. At the four corners of the tomb, a single palm branch is driven into the ground, each arching toward each other so that their tops meet in the center, sometimes this structure is also braided with flowers. Many other funerary Palm-branch traditions persist in North Africa today.

To the ancients, the stony pit of the fruit was considered protection from the Evil Eye and used as a natural amulet for this power. In the Sudan, the pit is used as a fertility talisman. It has also served in some traditions as prayer-beads, as for the *misbahah* or Islamic rosary.

Likewise, Palm branches fulfil the same purpose among Christians. As a talisman serving the role of a house-ward, Palm branches were hung in doorways to ensorcell a doorway against the entrance of an unwanted guest or mischevous spirit. In modern Egyptian folk healing, the Khusa is a bundle of palm branches over which incantations and circular charms are spoken to dispell spirits of fever. In some books of English ceremonial magic, a branch of Palm, blessed on Palm Sunday, was used to draw a circle to conjure spirits.

CORRESPONDENCES
Powers: Fertility, Protection from Maleficia, Summoning, Oblation, Purification, Funerary, Counterpoison.
Planet: Sun.
Deific Forms: Anubis, Apollo, Phoebus.
Element: Fire.
Medicine: Fortification.
Poison: Intoxication.
Image: A stone pillar surmounted by a burning lamp, sending forth rays.

DATURA

A GENUS comprising nine species worldwide, characterized by maddeningly fragrant, upright trumpet-shaped flowers; spiny pods, and strong medicine, particularly the tropane alkaloids so common to the Potato kin. Most have a rich history of use in sorcery and witchcraft in their respective locales. Representatives of genus *Datura* include Thorn Apple (*D. stramonium*), Devil's Trumpet (*D. metel*), and the Moonflower or Toloatzin (*D. innoxia*) of the southwestern United States. The so-called 'Tree Daturas', such as Angel's Trumpet, were once classed taxonomically as *Datura* but now classed *Brugmansia.*

DEADLY CARROT

Thapsia garganica
Apiaceæ (Dill Family)

THAPSIA has 8 species of toxic herbaceous perennials, distributed primarily in the Mediterranean and centered in North Africa and Spain. The small but magically important genus is colloquially known as the Deadly Carrots. A dweller of sunny expanses and exposed, rocky slopes, it has fine leaves and yellow compound umbels, somewhat resembling Fennel, and a thick taproot.

A related species is the Black Parsley (*Thapsia decipiens*) of Madeira, whose gum exudate produces a strong odor of carrot and turpentine. Another important and valued species is *T. villosa,* which enjoys wide distribution and has been used in Catalonia as a fish-stunning poison, its flowers are also the pigmentation source of a traditional yellow dye. Traditionally, incisions are made in the stalk at the base of the plant and the gum collected, sun-dried, and divided into pieces for future use.

Deadly carrot has a long history of traditional use in magic and medicine, across many cultures; it is theorized by some to be the mysterious *Silphion* so prized in ancient times, and which suddenly disappeared, perhaps due to extinction. The traditional Algerian resin *bon-nafa* is prepared from this plant, used as a counterirritant for rheumatic pain. A violent and grotesque dermatitis can arise as a result of handling the plant, with pustules and inflammation rivaling those of the Ranunculaceæ and Spanish Fly; this is the likely source of the folk name Scorching Fennel. In the present era, compounds isolated from Deadly Carrot show promise in anti-cancer therapies.

In Morocco it is known as *Sengura,* and the dried root is used ritually as a purificatory smoke. In Algeria it is known as *Driess,* and desssicated pieces of the plant are hung in fruit trees such a pomegranate for protection and to ensure a good harvest.

Magically, the plant may be considered a diabolic antipode of Angelica, allied with the element of Fire and the planet Mars, with action that is blistering, acrid, and heating. Its magical action is revulsive, and thus it both commands, as well as expels, the diabolic retinue. Its natural allies are the vesicating Spurges, some of which it shares natural habitat with.

DEVIL'S BIT SCABIOUS

Succisa pratensis
Dipsacaceæ (Teasel Family)

A PERENNIAL herb thriving on meadows, downlands and heaths, growing to a height of one meter, and having fragrant, sky-blue, pink or violet flowers. Its curiously-shaped root seems to terminate abruptly, as if molested by some subterranean malefactor. Legends attribute this unusual shape to Satan, who nibbled off the most valuable portion of the root in order to deprive humanity of the herb's goodness. Despite this, the nectar of the upper portions is freely available to lepidopterous species, making the plant ecologically important. Devil's Bit is native to North Africa, Europe, and Siberia, and is now naturalized in the United States.

As a medicinal therapeutic, Devil's Bit is a powerful woman's ally, especially suited for menstrual, uterine, and vaginal disorders. The blossoms are the principal medicinal part, though the leaves do possess virtues too. In magical lore, the powers attributed to it include healing, fortune in gambling, and protection from disease, and venomous beasts. The root serves as a talisman of protection, or, alternately, diablerie.

DEVILS IN THE BASILICA

THE wayfarer of Nature chances upon those gardens where paradise and perdition are one and the same. In the primordial Aztec paradise of Tamoanchan, humans were a byproduct of necromancy, generated from sacrificial blood and bone, *mumia* stolen from the underworld of Mictlan. The heaven known as Tlalocan was reserved for the deformed.

Our Green Sanctuary likewise contains many holy angels: those plants which are obviously useful to humanity and perceived as cooperating with our designs. Paradise would, however, not be complete without the presence of devils, and the Green Adytum has many. Our *locus amoenus* is haunted by the demonic, a group of plants which, when collectively considered, we hail as the Devil's Acre.

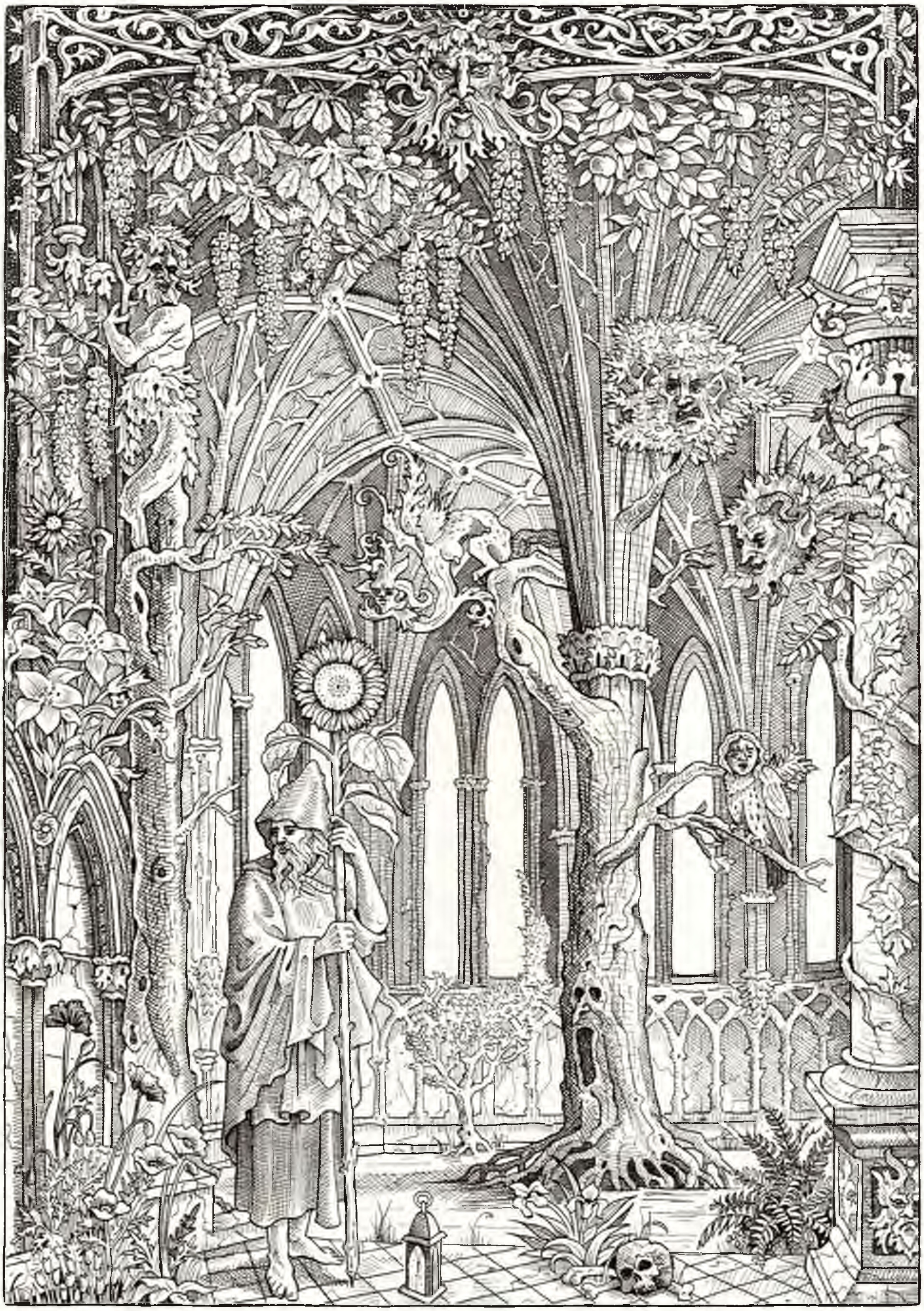
The egregore known as 'Devil' which so haunts and fascinates the Western mind is a composite of the near eastern Zoroastrian Ahriman, the Semitic *shaitans*, Pan, the silens, and by association the ancient and wise Saturnian Goat. Some ally him to the Egyptian Set, or a fallen Dionysus, ever ready to regain ascendance. The Faustian traditions have enriched his dark corona, lending it a greater—and necessary—philosophical vigor.

Despite the vulgarity of his characterizations in Christianity or popular culture, there are deeper and more complex magical realities to the Devil. He is the one men and women turn to when God has forsaken them, a power of last resort. This is a perennial feature of folk magic, which often views the Devil as an ever-present force which must be firmly respected as a matter of protocol, or calamity will ensue. To this end, in many charms he is given a ritual tithe, known as 'The Devil's Portion.' In occult phenomenology, the Devil thus represents the Opposer, those forces which, in any given situation, are arrayed against it. The Devil is the power that dwells in the reality not considered, by definition the Other.

Alchemically, the Devil is the principle of Sulphur, being volatility, but also foison, animating sap and, sometimes, the residue of the operation, the *caput mortuum*. In particular, the Devil is that Sulphur which has breached the bound homeostasis of the Philosopher's Triangle, and thus, the laboratory itself: the explosion that terminates the operation, and the uncontrolled fire which transmutes chaotically, outside the power of God, rather than according to lawful means. In occult pharmacy, a plant may be considered to have its Angel and its Devil—its therapeutics, and its contraindications: this is in sound agreement with Paracelsian doctrine.

Morphologically, plants allied with the Devil often contain structural analogues of his horns, bristles, and barbs. In the botanical realm, these features manifest as thorns, spines, burs and trichomes, often accompanied by venom. The grotesque and gaping-jawed demon known as the Hellmouth, pictured in medieval texts as the gateway to Hell, through which demons herded sinners, is recalled in the plant world in the seductively fatal genus *Nepenthes*, a carnivorous pitcher plant which lures insects into its vessel-like cavity where they are digested. If strict demonological correspondence must be applied, *Nepenthes* clearly lies in the dominion of Lilith, alluring seductress, queen of witches, and insatiable predator of the Juices of Man.

Particularly relevant to this diabolical criterion are the morphological features known as *raphides*, the tiny needle-like structures found in over 200 plant families, which have damaging effects on zoological physiologies. Formed of calcium oxalate or calcium carbonate, they ravage



IN THE PLACE OF SOLACE, MENACE

soft tissue as they pass through it, also serving to inject poisonous compounds as they move. Raphides are thought to be defense mechanisms against predators, but also serve as reservoirs for storing calcium, and play an important role in assisting plant structure. Perhaps the best-known plant containing this toxic and bristling array is Dumb Cane (*Dieffenbachia* spp.), a common houseplant which, when eaten, can cause the temporary inability to speak.

In naming schema, the word 'Devil' is often appended to places or landforms considered anomalous, phantasmagoric, grotesque or extreme in some way. In the landscape, these suggest infernal architectures, and in corresponding fashion some of them are igneous upwellings from the fiery depths, such as Devil's Tower or Brown Buffalo Horn in Wyoming. Other examples are the Devil's Pulpit, Devil's Ditch, and the Devil's Postpile, formed of otherworldly columns of basalt.

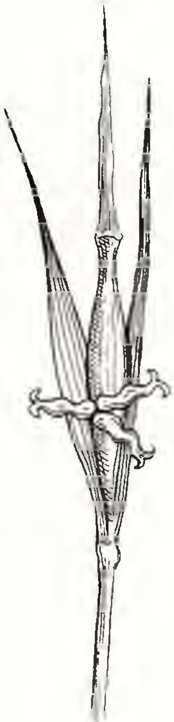
As applied to plants, a common or folk-name containing the word *Devil* often indicates a poisonous, thorny or irritating quality, as a random sampling will attest:

FOLK NAME	PLANT	BOTANICAL
Devil Dums	Ragwort	*Senecio*
Devil's Fig	Chicalote	*Argemone*
Devil's Plaything	Nettles	*Urtica* spp.
Devil's Tongue	Corn Poppy	*Papaver rhoeas*
Devils and Angels	Plantain	*Plantago*
Devil's Club	Cukilanarpak	*Oplopanax horridus*
Devil's Coachweel	Field Buttercup	*Ranunculus arvensis*
Devil's Wand	Fool's Parsley	*Aethusa cynapium*

What this particular assortment of devils share in unison are *poison, prickles,* and *proliferation*: three frequent characteristics of the weed. Other plants whose names associate them with the Devil may possess a foul odor, or a grotesque appearance, in alliance with diabolic landforms and place names.

That the Devil should be aligned with properties of dermal irritation is right and proper, for this route of poisoning stands as Opposition to personal comfort, and more importantly its burning sensation aligns, in Christian theology, with the flames of hell. Several plant families bear this ancient and blistering lineage, their leaves, wood and fruits provoking painful and rashes; the Anacardiaceæ and Euphorbiaceæ are especially rich groupings containing irritant or vesicant principles. The essence of these blistering compounds lies in poison, a philosophical zone traditionally aligned with both the Devil and witchcraft.

The tale of Grace is cautionary. Like many first-world citizens of the 1990s who set their sights upon the medicinal jungles of the tropics, she had romanticized the Yucatán as a hippie Eden, a botanical paradise validating fantasies of utopian wildcrafting and holistic medicine. The delusion was further reinforced by neglecting to study the flora of the area before traveling there. Upon her return, her normally smooth and shapely legs bore angry red cicatrices suggestive of multiple lashes with tarred rope. These horrific wheals were the result of exposure to *Metopium brownei*, known locally as Poisonwood. Characterized by unbearable itching, the initial symptoms of blisters frequently become infected by scratching, ultimately giving rise to the dermal equivalent of first and second-degree burns. The effects on the skin are devastating, such that exposure often leads to a bedbound state, or hospitalization. When I saw Grace years later, the scars had clearly faded, but were still discernible as a latticework of ruined flesh.



As a youth in the southern United States, my friends and I sought out Speargrass (*Nassella leuchotricha*) in the schoolyard, particularly as summer approached. As it ripened, the fruits of this grass developed sharp, pointed lemmata, analogous to the 'spearhead', with the long awn forming the haft. Naturally aerodynamic, these vegetal 'spears' which ranged from three to five inches in length, could be thrown great distances with incredible precision, and easily pierced both clothing and flesh. Fusillades were a common tactic in playground battles, and raised welts usually resulted. State and county agricultural agencies declared the plant a nuisance, injurious to livestock, but like many plants of the Devil's Acre, their diabolic and irritating properties also lead to the plant's successful reproduction. Our battles sowed the

Selected Diabolic Botanical Compounds

CHEMICAL	PLANT SOURCE	EFFECT
Urushiol	*Toxicodendron* spp. *Metopium* spp.	Skin Irritant
Anacardic acid	Cashew	Skin Irritant
Fouranocoumarins	*Heracleaum mantegazzianum*	Photosensitivity
Beta-methylamino-L-alanine	Blue Green Algæ, Cycads *Gunnera* spp.	Alzheimers and neurodegenerative disorders
Primin	Primula	Pain and blistering
Cysteine protease	*Deiffenbachia* spp.	Dysphagia

future fields; our cruel play was part of the plant's reproductive strategy.

A philosophical companion of Speargrass is the sandbur *Cenchrus spiniflex*, more commonly known simply among my Texan peers as 'stickers.' This obstreperous plant, which commonly infests lawns, produces a small, thorny bur-type fruit whose shape resembles a medieval war mace. Any child daring to venture barefoot into the inviting green of a lush summer lawn not only had harvest mites to contend with, but punishing *Cenchrus* burs which often had to be painstakingly dug out of feet with tweezers. Destroying both clothing and carpeting, the plant was equally despised by ranchers for its harassment of livestock, whose nasal passages it clogged, causing lacerations.

Surveying the pleasant and proper cottage garden, one encounters a different demon of irritation, the alluring *Primula obconica*, long a beloved flower of the English garden and its American heirs. Stinging trichomes located in the leaves present instantaneous inflammation not unlike that of stinging nettle. These hairlike structures on leaf and stem surfaces are adapted for the rapid injection of venom, in this case the benzoquinone derivative primin. As with many plants long maligned, *P. obconica* has recently been reassessed by science, with research in the past decade demonstrating antitumor and antimicrobial activity of primin and its derivatives.

The propensity for infestation is another quality associated with plants of the Devil's Acre, the realm of weeds and disease hosts. To the farmer, the weed is a devil, a strangler of the field, a threat to livelihood, family and farm. Like the deceit ascribed to Satan and his minions, the weed is in an infiltrator; like the Angels cast out of heaven and become demons, the weed is expelled from garden and field, exiled for its harmful qualities and perceived lack of usefulness.

In Judæo-Christian traditions—religions whose systematized prejudices continue to inform the Western view of plants—both the Devil and the Weed are co-located in the singular event of the expulsion from Eden, the curse of Yahweh upon the Tiller of the Field. In the New Testament, Christ's Parable of the Tares compares the Devil's followers to the weeds which infect grain, and whose seeds must be carefully sifted out after harvest.

In a similar vein, a plant can exhibit its diabolical propensity by serving as a host for disease. The soft trunk of the Palm, perennially associated with oases and in some cultures with the Holy Tree of Eden, often serves as a nest for rats. Near the small Guinean village of Meliandou, the hollow trunk of a massive Cola tree (*Cola acuminata*) is thought to have been the origination-point of the Ebola outbreak of 2014 which killed nearly 8,000 people and infected 20,000. It sheltered a colony of bats which carry the virus, thought to have infected the first victim in the epidemic. Importantly, in many regions of the world, certain trees are avoided as they are known to be haunted, or indwelt by devils, djinn or soul-destroying entities.

The ontological designation of 'weed' is, however, both horticultural, and relative. Rhododendron and Azalea, prized shrubs in California, are invasive weeds in England. The noble Gorse, so crucial to the British landscape, is a virulent scourge in California. Thus it is that the behavior of a plant in a specific location indicates its status as weed or desirable plant.

In demonological literature, we are assured that the Devil produces a great stink, associated in the lore of the Sabbat with hindparts of the Goat, and aligned with in Alchemy with *empyreuma*, the peculiar odor arising from combustion of organic matter in the closed vessel. This gives rise to the speculative discipline of Infernal Aromatics, which recognizes and exploits smells generally considered repulsive. Incenses compounded according to this rubric will have a sharp and rudely penetrating smell, with feculent notes of spoor, caustic medicine, and ordure. The genus *Ferula*, which includes such plants as Asafœtida, Ammoniac, and Sumbul, all contain pungent gums which readily volatilize when heated, best embodies this realm of the Devil's Acre. Not surprisingly, some of their common names do reflect this association, such as Devil's Dung, and the have long been prized as incenses for demon-chasing.

In consideration of the attributes of prickles, poison, and proliferation, as well as a putrid smell, one plant emerges encompassing them all: Thorn Apple or Jimsonweed (*Datura stramonium*). A wayfarer of roadsides, waste ground, dumps, as well as farms and gardens, the plant also produces a strong odor, considered unpleasant by many, a recurring signature of the Nightshade family. The hallucinations arising from ingestion of its poisonous seeds and flowers are frequently characterized by demonic and phantasmagoric imagery, in addition to physical sensations of heat and parching thirst.

GOVERNMENTS across the world, in a move reminiscent of religious fundamentalism, have banned many of these devils, for the pleasure they bring, or the nuisance they promise. Ever ready to save humanity from itself, certain plants are exorcised as demons with one hand, while the other hand profits from their powers. Yet the Wise will recognize this stratagem as one of restricting plant access to the privileged, not humanitarian protection. The High Priesthood of Industrial Pharmacy has built its own mountain of poisoned corpses, concealed by lawyer, lobbyist and a sanitized narrative.

The Devotee of the holy and untamed Natura is obliged to respect her Devils, as well as her Angels. Ours is not a path of blindness, ignoring those green firebrands hidden in the wayside path. At the least, they should be acknowledged, learned, and respected, lest the seeker of occult power find it—at the end of a short green noose.

Traffic with the Devil requires safety measures: heat-proofing, care in handling, as well as a hearty disposition. In this way the herbalist is like the Blacksmith and Chemist: the arcana of leather apron and gloves is instructive, as is the necessity of firebrick and chimney. Supping with the Fiend requires proper attire, and accoutrements; those who demur will receive a blister.

Let the Seeker after Nature know that another guise of the Devil is trickster, which the mundane falsely call 'deceiver.' This characteristic is his nature, but it must be understood that tricks contain both wisdom and power that the Wise may liberate. The methodology is to be humble and patient enough to learn from the trick.

Those who walk and reap the Devil's Acre must, above all, understand the nature of Opposition. Adversity on the path may drive one forward, especially when that which is Opposed is obstructing the way. But when Adversity is indulged for the sake of thrill, it ceases to be adverse, and only magnifies and validates the foolish excrescences of the ego.

Devil's Shoestring

IN the literature of occult herbalism, Devil's shoestring usually refers to roots of *Viburnum alnifolium*, also known as *Viburnum lantanoides*, a North American shrub in the Moschatel Family and a type of Wayfaring Tree. The Shoestring is a potent Hoodoo conjure for protection from all ills; it is frequently carried in the purse or wallet for this purpose. Roots soaked for a time in whiskey yield a strong hand-wash for luck and power.

Devil's Shoestring is also the name of an entirely unrelated plant, *Tephrosia virginiana*, *T. angustissima*, and several other *Tephrosia* species. The genus *Tephrosia*, belonging to the Pea Family, as a whole is known as the Hoary Peas or Goat Rues. These legumes are enthnobotanically important due to their use as a fish poison. Containing significant amounts of rotenone ($C_{23}H_{22}O_6$) and tephrosin ($C_{23}H_{22}O_7$), the roots are traditionally pounded and placed into the water to stun fish, rendering them easy prey. These plant species are also used internally for killing intestinal worms. *Tephrosia* contains about 350 accepted species worldwide, many of them containing allied toxic compounds, many also considered carcinogens. They receive their folk name 'Devil's Shoestring' from their long, toxic roots.

Dill

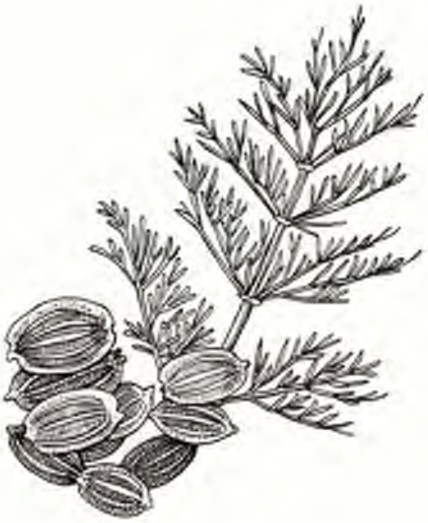
Anethum graveolens

Apiaceacæ (Dill Family)

A NATIVE of the Mediterranean and Black Sea areas, Dill is an aromatic annual herb growing to nearly 1 meter, having bluish-green filamentous foliage, and umbels of yellow flowers, giving rise to fragrant seeds. Though all parts of the plant are aromatic, the portions most employed are the seed, leaves, flowers; essential oil is also derived from fruit or leaves. In the garden, Dill attracts numerous beneficial insects such as ladybugs, lacewings and syrphid flies. The flowers and immature fruits have the greatest concentration of aromatic and flavor virtues.

In folk medicine, its curative virutes are stimulant, digestive, antimicrobial, stomachic, carminative and emmenagogue. Dill water is a galactagogue of some repute. *Anethum silvestre*, a wild Dill known as *hazā* in Arabic, was included in treatises on ancient Arabian medicine. Medieval antidote formulae made frequent use of Dill seed; for Opium poisoning, the alchemist Jabir recommended a compound of Dill, salt, and honey. In other cases, its decoction formed the basis of emetics used to purge the stomach of ingested poisons.

Among the planets, the herb is given to the dominion of Mercury, and to the element of Air, both attributions reflecting its influence on the mind, and concentrating thought. Its occult properties are Protection from Maleficia, Exorcism, Coercion, Triumph, and Charisma. It is also considered aphrodisiac, both magically and medically, an attribute increasingly finding affirmation in animal studies.

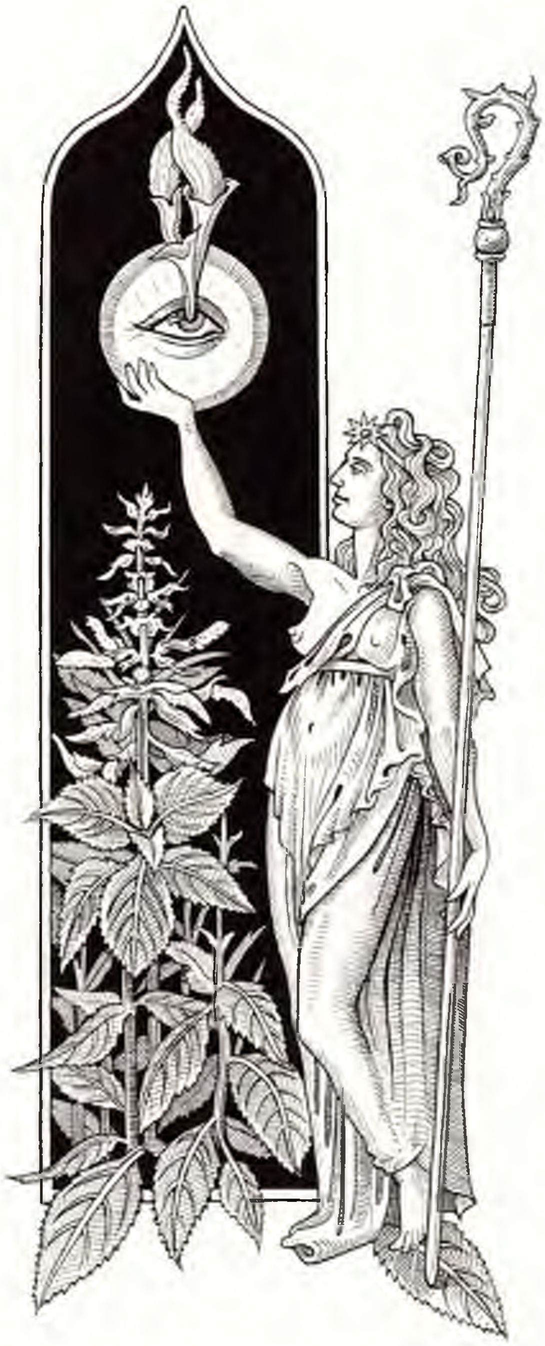


The Spirit-Retinue of Dill

Expansion, Dilation, Dispersion, Brightness,
Precision, Acumination, Fomentation,
Fecundation, Calculation, Animation,
Amplified Force, Vivified Thought,
and Aroused Revelation.

In antiquity, Dill seeds were used as protection against magical attack, and sachets of them were worn close to the body for immunity against sorcery. English folklore ascribed the powers of constraint to Dill, preventing the entry of a witch into the house; or, once in, to keep her inside. Potent reversing spells of ancient repute utilized a combination of Dill, Rue, and Vervain.

A popular medieval love philtre was compounded of fresh Dill sprigs steeped in hot wine. As a talisman of compelling, the seeds are taken to court as an operation for ensnaring a judge to the sorcerer's will.



DIVINER'S SAGE

Salvia divinorum

Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

SKA Pastora, or Herb of the Shepherdess as the plant is also known, is a singular Mexican sage from the mountains of norther Oaxaca, one of approximately 1000 species of *Salvia* or True Sages. Ovate leaves. The vegetative parts of the plant are a peculiar color of green, having traces of both yellow and turquoise commingled. Its stems are square in cross section, as for all plants of the Mint Family, though this aspect seems particularly pronounced in Ska Pastora given their size, smoothness and thickness. The flower is pale in color, tinted with pale lilac, and having a very subtle, peculiar aroma which can be likened to egg nog. It is generally described in the literature as being approximately one meter tall, although I have seen specimens thriving in private collections attaining twice that height. Grown as an ornamental in conditions mimicking its native cloud forest, it thrives with frequent mist.

In Mexico the plant is used for shamanic purposes in Mazatec healing rituals, particularly when Psilocybe mushrooms are not available. The tea is employed for headache and rheumatism; it also has some repute as a urinary cleanser and as a specific for anemia. As a healing medicament, an infusion of 4–5 pairs of leaves makes a non-psychoactive, though virtuous, tea.

The American ethnobotanical researcher R. Gordon Wasson believed the plant to be the mysterious ancient psychoactive the Aztecs knew as *pipiltzintzintli*, though definitive proof is elusive, and attribution controversial. Within the body, the psychoactivity of Diviner's Sage arises principally from Salvanorin A ($C_{23}H_{28}O_8$), a diterpene-like molecule. Growing in deep shade seems to increase its potency, strengthening its esoteric planetary association with the Moon.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF DIVINER'S SAGE

Sapience, Prescience, Mystagogia, Cure, Vista, Distortion, Alienation, Dispensation, Magnification, Dysmetropsia, Permutated Flesh, Didymous Counsel, and Umbral Epiphany.

As noted, the plant is allied with Luna and embodies her classic qualities, being phasic, transient, and concerned with subtlety, mystery, interior experience, emotion, and the cyclic interplay between light and shadow. An additional property the plant shares with the Moon is alliance with feminine magic, and 'witchcraft'. Its occult properties are Divination, Healing, Allure, and Atavistic Summoning. Hardy individuals may also serve as House Wards, even where a psychoactive or medicinal relationship with its human steward is absent.

Traditionally, the fresh leaves are chewed as a quid, but not swallowed, allowing the active principles to be absorbed via the oral mucosa. Ethnobotanical poet Dale Pendell refers to this method as the Path of Leaves, a byway marked by extreme bitterness, astringency, and a jarring near-complete usurpation of consciousness by the vegetal *daimon*. The dried leaves are also smoked by some, or taken as a tincture or liquid extract, though these methods are modern and not traditional.

The dissociative features of early intoxication, when chewing via the traditional method, can be pronounced; those who have crossed this bridge know to have contingencies for identity-loss. From my own journal entries of 1994:

> *Under the sway of the leaves I lost myself. It was a condition of 'exile' from the body which began in the tongue and throat, then migrated to head & body, then to all cognitions accounting myself whole. For several moments the struggle to maintain identity was excruciating; once lost, its pursuit became ridiculous. The collapse of self-reference was amplified by a perverse scene playing out before my eyes. My companion, who had also chewed, was also engaged in a similar struggle, but where mine had been internally experienced, his assumed the form of the visceral. His arms flailed violently, defending himself against the viscious attacks of an unseen enemy. As he fought on, the monster manifest visually, having seemingly extruded from him as some grotesque physical organism. I could no longer see his face, as his head and upper torso became consumed with a flailing mass of green tentacles & swelling bullae. Horror descended, and, disturbingly, a sensation of hilarity. Awareness was then obliviated. Later, after a return to my senses, I offered prayers & thanks:*
>
> *"Lady, I am indebted to your bitterness."*

The appellation *divinorum* refers to the plant's oracular power, a varied and highly personal phytognostic arena. Pendell used a variety of mantic approaches with the plant, including the Tarot, a method he shared with me. In subsequent years I found the visual field of the Tarot too heavily imbued with graphical suggestions and gravitated toward polished stones and other reflective surfaces. However, the simple use of the plant in darkness, giving the offerings of humility and an attentive ear, is perhaps most noble and effective.

By tradition Ska Pastora is said to speak softly, and the presence of noise, or loud people, contraindicates her presence. This taboo, as well as avoiding sexual activity and light, stresses the plant's subtle nature, and its requirement for undivided attention. Here we consider the principle that in order to be an oracle, one must be empty, a purified vessel possessing capacity, before one can be 'filled' with the tongues of the spirits.

CORRESPONDENCES

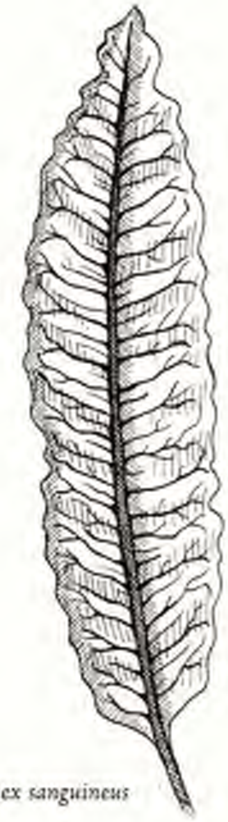
Powers: Augury.
Planets: The Moon.
Virtue: Silence.
Saints: Mary, Peter, Clara.
Domain: Wilderness.
Therapeutic: Empathy.
Affliction: Ego-Loss.
Body Part: Mouth.
Eponymous Compounds: Salvanorin A.
Embodied State: The Oracle Possessed.
Emblem: A veiled priestess seated beneath the moon in a bower of oak and pine, with a shepherd's crook in her right hand, and a mirror in her left.

DOCK

Rumex spp.
Polygonaceæ (Buckwheat Family)

AN HERB of Venus and Jupiter, Dock grows abundantly in meadows and pastures, and is readily identifiable in the landscape as a denizen of low places. The plant is long-stalked, with reddish flowers and sagittate leaves having a sour taste. Dock's fondness for saturated soils is reflected in The Nahuatl name for Fiddle Dock (*Rumex pulcher*) *Atl-inan* or 'Its Mother is Water'. Historically, Dock's powers in magic and ritual encompass Fertility, Wealth and Success in Commerce.

In folk medicine, the herb is much used as a hepatic, depurative, astringent, tonic, and refrigerant. It has been much celebrated for its use to treat jaundice and liver complaints, as well as its resonance with the kidneys. Internal ulcers have also been so treated. Topically, Docks are excellent for boils, sores, psoriasis, ulcerations, and for reducing inflammation. As country folk have known for generations, the mashed leaves, applied as a poultice, have soothed the stings of Nettle. Giant Water Dock (*R. hydrolapathum*) has a reputation for restoring strength and vigor to loose teeth. In Devonshire, Dock leaves placed in the shoes are an old Romany aid for walking.



Rumex sanguineus

Various Docks including *R. acetosa* and *R. acetosella* have reliably yielded yellow, orange, and maroon plant dyes after boiling and mordanting with alum. The leaves yield coloration in the yellow-green spectrum and the roots the orange-red.

In ancient Saxon Leechcraft, Dock was used as a magical prophylactic against 'Water Elf Disease'. Infertile women have employed the seeds, carried in a small bag close to the body, as a charm for conceiving a child, or used Dock in seed-scattering charms. In North America, various Docks were hunting aids, smoldered in order to lure game.

An African charm for protection against a mortal enemy employed the seeds of a Swamp Dock. The sorcerer was first to cut off the head of a snake, then plant the Dock seed in its head. The head so inseminated was to be buried in a seven day old grave and watered for three consecutive nights. After the Dock attained a height of 1 meter, the sorcerer returned to harvest the whole plant naked. Thereafter this plant was to be worn as a magical girdle which, when the sorcerer was threatened, would transform itself into a vicious, belligerent snake which would strike out at the enemy.

DODDER

Cuscuta spp.

Convolvulaceæ (Morning Glory Family)

KNOWN as Witch's Hair, Dodder is an unseemly plant, haunting the fields in pale, filamentous threads. Resembling an ethereal disgorgement of fairy-entrails, its initial appearance to the eye reveals merely a system of thin, strangling stems, but the plant does possess insignificant leaves as well, and when flowering its delicate blossoms, often a pale pink or red, can be quite alluring. Its pale color is due to the plant's inability to synthesize chlorophyll, though a few species can achieve this in a limited capacity. *Cuscuta*, the genus of True Dodders, is of considerable size, with at least 125 accepted species.

According to English farm lore, strands of Dodder were spun nightly by Satan, then unleashed on the fields to destroy crops. As a parasite, Dodder is wholly dependent on a host plant, and is an agricultural pest which can devastate crops. Hosts typically infested include Furze, Clovers and Thistles, but there are hundred more, including species of economic importance such as Flax and Potato. Sometimes Dodder favors plants with hot and dry energies for a host like Savory and Thyme. The plant often possesses the medicinal and magical virtues of its parasitized host, assimilating them for themselves. Maude Grieve illustrates this in *A Modern Herbal* by remarking that Dodders infesting Nettles possess the latter's urine-promoting diuretic powers.

But Dodder on her Spouse depends alone,
And nothing in her self can call her own.
Fed with his juice, she on his stalk is born,
And thinks his Leaves her head full well adorn.

ABRAHAM COWLEY
The Sixth Book of Plants, 1689

Its action upon the human body is purgative, hepatic, diuretic, antiscorbutic, aphrodisiac, and contraceptive. The fresh-gathered threads are sometimes boiled in water for a medicament, along with Allspice and Ginger, for use in kidney, liver, and spleen complaints. In North America, the Paiute employed the plant as a contraceptive, hence its name *Woman Without Children.*

In ancient Greece, Dodder was sacred to Nymphs of springs. In Ozark folk magic, the plant is employed in love potions. Seeds of all species of *Cuscuta* have been have a long history of use as an aphrodisiac in Chinese pharmacology.

An occasional ingredient in the counter-poisons of the Nabataean magical historian Ibn Wahshiyya, one formula used against Monkshood poisoning specified equal parts dried Dodder, seed of Turnip, seed and dried leaf of Endive, and wild chicory, boiled in old wine and drunk. One species of Dodder, *Cuscuta megalocarpa*, was used by the Navajo as a ceremonial emetic.

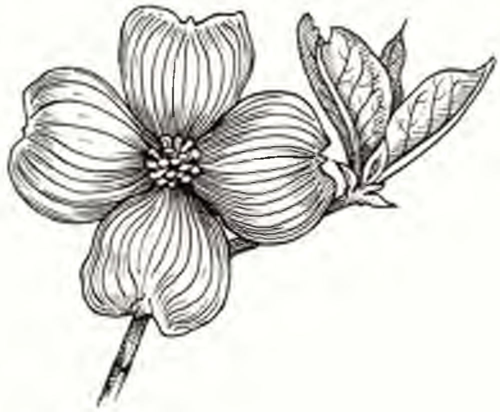
CORRESPONDENCES

Essence: Acquisition
Magical Powers: Love-Charm, Allure, Coercion, Binding, Vampirism, Wealth.
Planets: The Moon and Venus.
Deific Forms: Lilith.
Domain: Meadow.
Body Part: Lips, Mouth, and Throat.
Atavistic Power: Parasitism.
Embodied State: Vampire.
Magical Gesture: *Osculum Infame.*
Affliction: Exsanguination.
Therapeutic: Nutrition.
Image: A moon-pale succubus with filamentous hair, mounting a man sleeping in a grain field.

DOGWOOD

Cornus spp.
Cornaceæ (Dogwood Family)

DOGWOOD or Cornel is a tree growing 5–7 meters in height, endemic to the northern hemisphere, mostly deciduous, having white or pinkish white flowers featuring four bracts, and much admired by gardeners for its magnificent floral display. Its medicinal powers are astringent, diuretic, antihypertensive, febrifuge, and aperitif. Dogwood is a celebrated remedy for fever; and has been used in folk remedies for treating typhoid: the quinine-bearing bark of *Cornus stolonifera*, a North American Dogwood, was brewed into a medicinal tea for this purpose. Berries have been used to stimulate the appetite, and a berry tincture soothes an ulcerated stomach aggravated by excessive alcohol consumption. The anæsthetic properties of Panicled Dogwood (*C. paniculata*), were valued in Native American medicine, where it was employed in cases of toothache. Its occult powers encompass Vigor, Fertility, Protection, and Beast-charming. The fragrant inner bark of some Dogwood species was prized for *kinnikinnick* and ceremonial smoking mixtures.



In ancient Roman legend, the site of Rome was built on the spot where a Dogwood javelin thrown by Romulus landed. In the lore of ancient Phrygia, its bark was used by Midas to tie the Gordian Knot. In the later folk-magic of the Balkans, the need-fire was traditionally kindled with Dogwood. In southern Italian folk magic, crosses made from twigs of *Cornus sanguinea* are used against *maleficia*. In Prussian lore, the sap is of marvelous power for enchantment, and if gathered on a handkerchief on St. John's Eve, will grant any wish.

A number of Dogwood species are endemic to North America, where a corresponding battery of magical charms attends upon the tree. Ozark folklore relates a legend of the Dogwood being cursed by Christ, and modern mountain men carry small pieces of Dogwod in the pocket as magical protection from mad dogs. In Nova Scotia, the wood commanded a reputation as a sovereign remedy against bewitching. Crosses made from Dogwood were hung upon doors as anti-witchcraft fetishes, sometimes after being soaked in an extract of Poison Hemlock. Smaller exemplars, carved or made from twigs, were carried in the pocket for the same purpose. Thole pins of the wood were also used for magical empowerment of boats.

The Spirit-Retinue of Dogwood

Grace, Deliberation, Sobriety, Defense, Advocacy, Incentive, Righteousness, Preeminence, Confidence, Ignition, Intrepid Wardship, Divine Recrimination, & Noble Action.

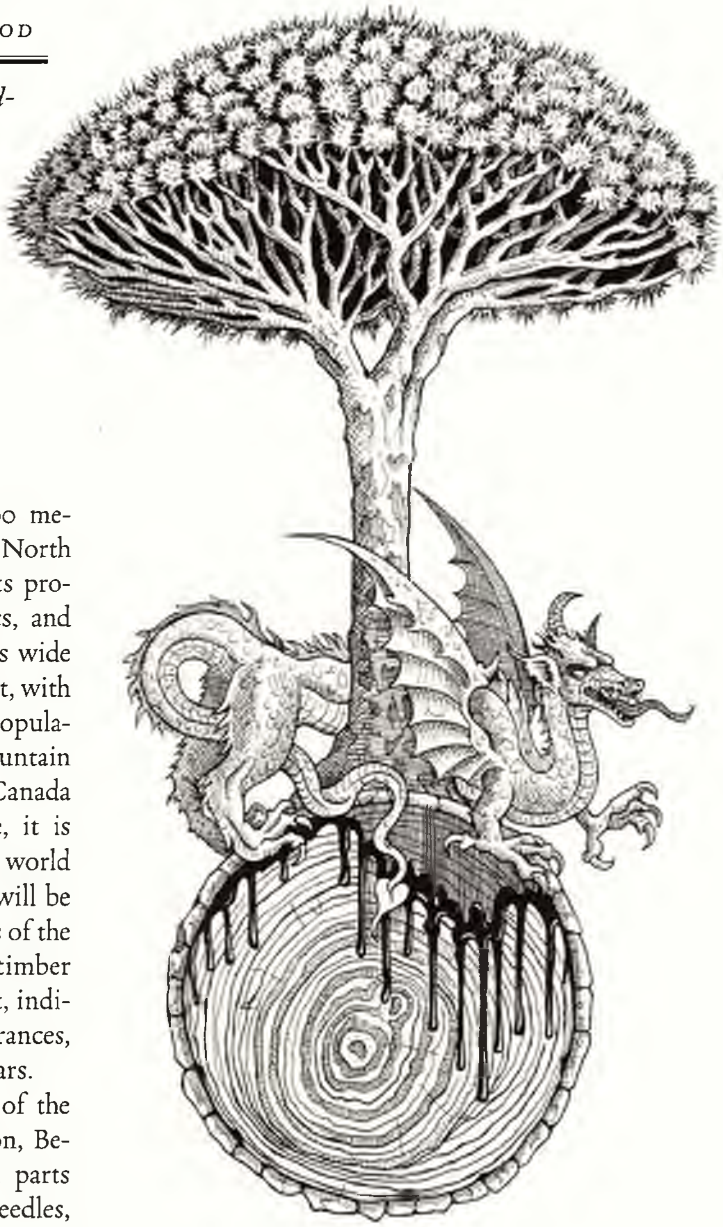
DOUGLAS FIR

Pseudotsuga menziesii
Pinaceæ (Pine Family)

A CONIFEROUS tree growing to 100 meters, native to the Pacific Northwest of North America, Douglas Fir is remarkable for its provision of medicine, food, fiber, aromatics, and wood for durable goods. The tree exhibits wide genetic diversity, varying with environment, with subspecies divided between the coastal populations (subsp. *menziesii*) and the Rocky Mountain varieties extending from Mexico into Canada (subsp. *glauca*). Outside its native range, it is widely grown in temperate zones of the world as a fast-maturing timber crop. The tree will be known to some inhabiting temperate zones of the world where it is grown as a fast-growing timber crop. However, in its native coastal habitat, individual trees can reach great heights, appearances, and ages, some in excess of a thousand years.

It is allied with the planetary virtues of the Sun, and it is used in rites of Purification, Beneficence, and Funerary significance. All parts of the tree including wood, bark and needles, are fragrant. The white or pale-yellow resin, as especially gathered from aged trees in their native range, produces a citrus-balsam fragrance when burned, and is strongly puricatory in action. It is also known by the name Balsam Oregon.

Boughs of Douglas Fir were used ceremonially in many Native American traditions, used for strewing or for the floors of sweathouses. The boughs were also boiled and used as a purifying wash on the skin, or to bless the body. Among the Coast Salish of the Pacific Northwest, the warmed cone was sometimes used as a charm to stop the rain. The needles were also used by the Ramah Navajo as a ceremonial emetic.



DRAGON'S BLOOD

Dracaena draco; Dracaena cinnabari
Asparagaceae (Asparagus Family)

MEDIEVAL texts of sorcery and magic refer to *Sanguis Draconis*, the blood-red resin or powdered wood from two different trees, Burmese Rosewood *Pterocarpus indicus*, and the Dragon Tree, *Dracaena draco*. Other ancient names for the Dragon Tree were Dam Janin, Dam Lakima, and Damm al-Akhawayn.

The Socotra Dragon Tree (*Dracaena cinnabari*) is thought to be the original source of the resin incense. Among its many traditional uses, it is esteemed as an abortifacient, and to drive away djinn. Endemic to the Island of Socotra, now part of Yemen, the species is threatened by degradation of habitat and warfare, and any resin obtained should be from sources able to guarantee ecologically sustainable harvest methods.

The Dragon Tree (*Dracaena draco*, native to the Canary Islands) was the ancient source of Dragon's Blood 'tears' formerly available but now rarely seen. The Guanches, the original peoples of the Canary Islands, regarded the tree as sacred, and employed its resin for embalming of their Dead. In medieval Europe, the resin was prized by women as a philtre; one charm employed the smoldering resin, burned near an open window for seven consecutive nights, to bring back a straying husband or lover.

Daemonorops draco, known to Ayurvedic medicine as Raktaniryaas, and to the West as East Indian Dragon's Blood, is a spiny palm, and is the present source of the resin of commerce. There are about 100 different species in the genus *Daemonorops,* mostly spiny, either growing in tufts or having a climbing habit. The seeds of some species are used as beads for the Buddhist mala, and in Ayurvedic medicine, *Daemonorops jenkinsianus* is used for drying excessively moist coniditions, such as arresting edema.

In the occult practices of Western Esotericism, Dragon's Blood resin is used principally as an incense, and it is aligned with the planetary virtues of Mars. Its primary powers in magic are oblative or Offertory, being at once a perfurmed and caliginous analogue of blood. As such, its addition to other incenses and fragrances lends the added power of living sacrifice, serving as fuel for the magical operation. This essential principle accounts for the dissonance in effect experienced by those using it for 'protection'.

The Spirit-Retinue of Dragon's Blood

Frenzy, Incitement, Combustion, Fomentation,
Refulgence, Dynamism, Vivacity, Nourishment,
Fertilization, Genesis, Lavish Banquets,
Forceful Bellows, and
Fiery Deluge.

EBONY

As it is generally understood, Ebony is a tree with dense, black hardwood, historically used for carving sacred objects, and making furniture. The name is also used to refer to this tree's wood, particularly in the fine arts. However, modern taxonomic classifications can be misleading, due to the use of the same name for unrelated trees and their products. Many Ebony trees have been overexploited in their native ranges, but due to the hard work of a growing number of dedicated agroforesters, it is becoming increasingly easy to source sustainably farmed wood.

EGYPTIAN EBONY

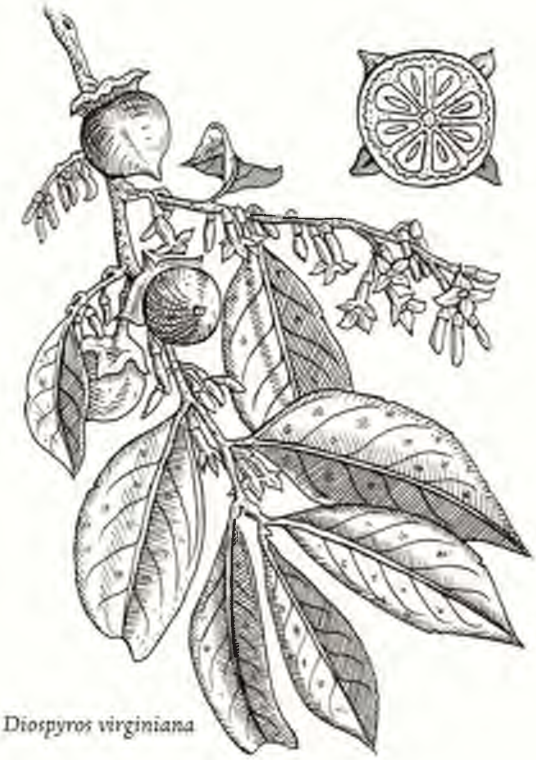
In western occultism, most historical references to Ebony come by way of Egypt and the Near East, in which the tree makes an appearance as a sacred plant in several ritual operations. Ancient Egyptian references to *hbny,* from which the modern name is derived, and which the Greeks associated with the god Hermes, was *Dahlbergia melanoxylon,* an African tree from the Pea Family.

An ancient Egyptian magical ointment for "Seeing the Bark of Phre" appears in *The Leyden Papyrus,* containing such ingredients as ground lapis lazuli, myrrh, 'Great of Amen plant', blood of hoopoe, blood of nightjar, goat's tear, 'Footprint of Isis plant', and Ebony wood. The dense wood formed the throne of Pluto, the eidolon of the Pythian Apollo, and statues of many Egyptian deities.

An Ebony wand is stipulated as the magician's rod of conjuring in the magical treatise *The Art of Drawing Spirits into Crystals,* attributed to Trithemius, but probably spurious. In the times of Sir John of Mandeville, the wood was widely considered to change at certain times into living flesh.

'TRUE' EBONY

The group of trees botanically classed in modern times as True Ebonies is *Diospyros,* a sprawling genus encompassing an accepted 750 species of tree distributed over the Northern hemisphere. These Ebonies are diverse in form, but united in their traits of having hard, dense, heavy wood, and enjoying long veneration by woodworking artisans. Only a small number of species of *Diospyros*, however, possess the deep black wood that most associate with the word 'ebony'. The type species is Ceylon Ebony (*Disospyros ebenum*), but there are several others, including the Mauritius Ebony (*D. tessellaria*) whose biodiversity suffered greatly under Dutch colonialism. The wood of *Diospyros* Ebonies has been esteemed for carving since ancient times, and exhibits a warm, 'darkly bright' lustre after polishing.



Diospyros virginiana

Branches of *Diospyros melanoxylon* were used by the Oroan tribes of India for repelling evil spirits, averting fascination, and the protection of crops. In some regions, epiphytic plants growing on this tree were also imbued with anti-witchcraft powers and used as amulets. The leaves of the same tree, known as *tendu* in Hindi, form the external wrapper of bidi cigarettes, noted for the high concentrations of nicotine in their tobacco, and, in some older formulations, the presence of Jimsonweed (*Datura stramonium*). A number of Ebony species in East Africa, including *D. cornii* and *D. natalensis* are highly esteemed for their power against witchcraft, and their wood is used for making protective charms, or for 'returning' the effects of maleficia back to their senders. The native North American *Diospyros* are the American Persimmon (*D. virginiana*) and the Texas Persimmon (*D. texana*), both trees worthy of inclusion in the magical garden, for their beauty, ethnomedicine, and spiritually protective aspects.

Both forms of Ebony possess the occult power of conduction, or the *active* reception, containment, and projection of power. This property renders the wood ideal for the making of wands, as well as fetishes that embody the ancestors, spirits and gods. In the philosophy of planetary correspondence, Ebony receives its power from Mercury, being the transmitter, and transmuter, of the spheres.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF EBONY

Noctilucence, Conveyance, Reception, Possession,
Rarity, Ancestral Weight, Steely Countenance,
Severe Aspect, Presenced Godhood, Geminate
Sentience, Imperious Density, Hideous
Force, and Thwarted Invasions.

EGLANTINE

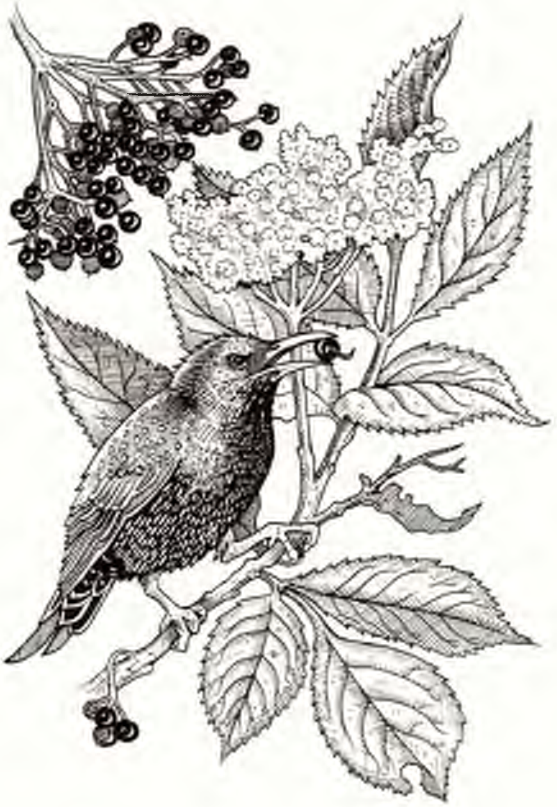
Rosa rubiginosa

Rosaceæ (Rose Family)

THE wild and noble rose called Eglantine is a spreading, thorny shrub to 2 meters, having pinnate leaves with oval leaflets, pleasantly fragrant flowers, hooked thorns, and small hips growing to 2 cm in diameter. Known for its rapturous and alluring odors, it was a favorite old-time posy, but its aromatic extraction has bedeviled perfumers, who imitated it with imperfect result. Hips provide important culinary extrapolations such as tea, jam and conserves. Originating in Europe, it has spread to many places such as New England and Australia, where it is considered a weed. Some give the name Eglantine to the Dog Rose (*Rosa canina*).

Its planetary governor is the Sun, though it may manifest aspects of both Venus and Mars according to its magical purpose. Its occult powers are luring, snaring, and protection, empowered by its unique downward-pointing thorns and hardiness. Like many wild rose species, its dried leaves provide a strong suffumigating smoke. A magical operation to reveal and catch a thief, found in the grimore *De Nigromantia* attributed to Roger Bacon, requires that the fire in the heart of the Magic Circle be kindled of dry Eglantine.

In European Christian traditions, the plant was said to have served as the humiliating, thorny circlet wreathing the head of the Christos as he was goaded to his crucifixion. The plant also has associations with the Devil, who sought without success to use its thorns as a ladder to clamber out of the infernal pit.



ELDER

Sambucus nigra; S. canadensis
Adoxaceæ (Moschatel Family)

A SHRUBBY tree of the temperate northen hemisphere, sometimes reaching heights of 12 meters, having musky-scented bark, similarly odorous leaves, pale white flowers, and clusters of burgundy, drupe-like berries. When branches are broken or pruned, new branches often grow at right angles to the parent stem, creating bizarre, twisted forms. The portions used are the leaf, flower and berry, occasionally the bark. In many folk traditions, cutting the wood is strictly taboo. The wood was especially forbidden for making cradles, as they would cause the children who slept therein to sicken and die.

The tree has enjoyed extensive use in ethnomedicine: berry tea is given for coughs, catarrh, asthma and flu; this same tea can be used topically for treating burns and scalds. A flower infusion chases fevers and lung aggravations, while an infusion of the leaves aids in curing troubled skin, and can be applied as a poultice to bruises and sprains. The bark has been used to treat epilepsy, while the powers of the roots are summoned to treat lymphatic and renal complications. Country healers invoked the tree's genius to expel disease-causing spirits from sick persons, and an old Sussex charm against rheumatism utilized a twig of Elder naturally having three or four knots in it, carried in the pocket or close to the body.

Though Elder has a celebrated history as medicine, all parts of the plant are mildly toxic, containing cyanogenic glycosides. Heat destroys this malign principle, and cooking or steeping of plant material is required for internal use. Large amounts of raw berries, leaves, bark, or roots may cause diarrhea or nausea.

Many Elders fall under the dominion of Venus; Mars infuses Dwarf Elder (*S. ebulus*) with its power, and Saturn commands the Black Elder (*S. nigra*). Its powers in magical usage are diverse, including protection, summoning, binding, longevity, wands, congress with faerie, protection from thieves, and as an insecticide. Walpurgisnacht (April 30) is one of the tree's sacred dates. Leaves of Elder gathered at this time were used as protection against witchcraft. In the magic of continental Europe, it was used as a charm for the prevention of lightning strikes, particularly on Good Friday, when wreaths of Elder were hung after sunset. The flower in particular is used in love charms; folklore relates that if blossoms of Elder are brewed into beer or ale, and a man and a woman drink of it together, the two would wed within the year.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF ELDER

Accusation, Condemnation, Restitution, Disembowelment, Expiration, Penury, Interment, Inevitability, Forceful Intervention, Shrouded Nobility, Baleful Shadows, and Noisome Efflux.

Polish and Ukrainian traditions also regard the tree as cursed, belonging to the patronage of Judas. It was approached with caution, and cutting it was thought to lead to disease, death or madness. One notes in the old literature and lore references to the tree's nefarious character. However, there seems to be an equal, if not greater, amount of lore ascribing virtues of beneficence to the tree as malevolence. *The Oxford Dictionary of Plant Lore* proposes that much of the lore surrounding the tree seems to have grown out of a desire to protect it as a cherished and valuable resource.

For the work of sorcery, protection ranks chief among the tree's magical powers. At one time, the wood was employed magically to remove poison from metal vessels, and undertakers once had a tradition of carrying a bit of Elder with them as a ward against noxious spirits. In Hildesheim, gravediggers used a wand of Elder to measure the corpse prior to burial. Traditional spells in Eastern Europe petition the genius of Elder to drive away thieves. In areas haunted by demons, ghosts, and magical malefactors, one is advised to plant hedgerows of Blackthorn and Elder one one's land. Some Voodoo spells grind the berries to make a protection powder for sprinkling the home.

To cure fever, an old German charm required the patient to break a branch from an Elder tree and plant it in the earth. The malignant, disease-causing influences would then be transferred into the sapling, and the patient would recover. In Sussex, an old charm to remove 'proud flesh' or warts used a freshly cut green twig of Elder, which was used to rub the wart and then buried. As the twig returned to the soil, the wart would disappear.

In Russian folk magic, an enchanted walking stick was crafted from a hollowed-out Elder branch filled with powdered ironstone, together with a number of pulverized animal ingredients: wolf's eyes, three swallow hearts and a dog heart, three tongues from green lizards, and finally, an iron rod. This magical staff afforded protection during travel, especially from wild animals and human illdoers.

LITANY OF NAMES

Acte, Alderne, Baw-tree, Bourtree, Borral, Bothery, Buzina, Devil's Wood, Eldrum, Ellanwood, Ellen-tree, Hellantree, Hilder, Hollander, Hylder, Judastree, Man's Blood, Skaw, Sureau, Whitaller, Whistlewood, Witching Wood.

In the Isle of Man, Elders called *tramman* trees were planted outside cottages as appeasement and habitat for fairies. Certain areas of Europe had a solemn tradition of taking off one's hat in the presence of an Elder and praying to The Elder Mother before gathering the Tree's berries. The Dwarf Elder or Danewort, was thought in many regions of Europe to cause insanity, and in some locales areas it is still believed that if one falls asleep beneath an Elder while it is flowering, one may be either poisoned or never awake. The association of Elder with fairies persists in many lands.

The wood of Elder and the spirit of tree itself is invoked in a spell against hunters in the grimoire *The Clavicle of Solomon*. This is curious, given the tree's faerie associations, and the traditional revulsion of the Good Folk to the iron tools of humans. In the *Grimorium Verum*, a rod of elder is among the regalia dictated for summoning of spirits by way of the Pentacle of Solomon.

The power of summoning is also attested to in the curious practices of some Northern European Traditions which employ magic whistles crafted from Elder to conjure spirits. In the lore of the British Isles, the green sap of the bark is applied to the eyelids to bestow the 'Second Sight', to enable the seer to glimpse beyond the veils of mortal matter.

NOTES REGARDING PROTOCOL AND DECORUM

One must obtain the consent of the Elder spirit prior to cutting it or risk its wrath. In Denmark, a dryad named *Hylde-Moer* was known to indwell the tree; if it was cut down, the genius pursued and haunted those who possessed items made from its wood. Elsewhere, this Wood Spirit was known as Lady Ellhorn. In the Baltic and Slavic countries, Elders were the dwelling-place of *Puschkayt*, an earth-spirit to whom oblations of food were left at the base of the tree.

When the Elder is cut, it bleeds, and numerous traditions hold that by injuring the Tree one runs the risk of bewitching oneself. Some taboos against cutting originate with Christian legends of Judas hanging himself from an Elder, but it is probable that this legend overlaid an earlier substratum of animistic arboreal reverence.

In one curious and complex example of the harvesting taboo, *Bald's Leechbook*, Book III, Leechdom 62, instructs the herbalist to approach the tree on a Wednesday at sunset, sinking the knife into the plant and leaving it there until the sun rises. At this time, the plant is dug and taken into a church, where it is laid under the altar for a time, then taken and washed in preparation for sanctified use.

Sprigs may be picked for use in charms and talismans; some consider the most fortuitous day for this to be the last day of April. Elderberries gathered on Midsummer Eve are said possess the most potent magical virtues. Leaves should be collected on June and July mornings, shortly after the dew has dried. Flowers are gathered while in full bloom. Other traditions advise that the night of January 6 is best for collection of Elder wood. One must first ask the spirit of the tree for permission; if granted, a limb or twigs may be cut; if denied, one must spit three times and depart.

Red Bitters I.

For use in alcoholic drinks and spritzers.

Agave Nectar	15 ml
Hibiscus flowers, dried	15 g
Elderberries, dried	10 g
Cherries, ripe and unripe, pierced	15
Saffron stigmas	20
Lemon leaves, shredded	2
Bourbon whiskey, 45% ABV	300 ml

℄ Place all into vessel and steep for one month, shaking frequently. Strain into clean bottle, seal, and keep under refrigeration.

ELECAMPANE

Inula helenium; I. racemosa

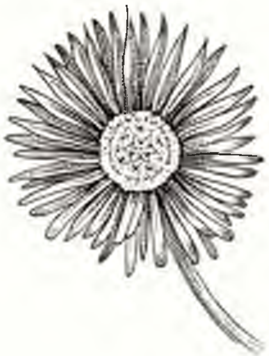
Asteraceæ (Sunflower Family)

ELECAMPANE commonly occurs in wastelands and gardens in the northern hemisphere; in England it is naturalized, occurring commonly on islands and coastal areas formerly associated with Celtic monastic practice. The morphology of the plant is similar to Calendula, though Elecampane can reach over 2 meters in height. Its flowers are yellow, disc-shaped composites with very narrow petals, appearing in summer. The genus *Inula* contains approximately 100 individual species, some of which are medicinal or fragrant. The plant is also known by the common names Inulin, Helenion, Scabwort, Horseheal, and Elf-Docke.

The thick, fragrant root, evocative of the odor of violets, is the part most often encountered in commerce, and is employed in incenses, sachets, brews, and powders. The species derives its name from Helen of Troy, who was gathering the herb when abducted. *Inula racemosa* is the species native to India, where it is esteemed as a precious incense. Essential oils of varying quality are also available, though discretion should be used when seeking to procure them.

Folk healers employed the herb as an antibacterial, antifungal, expectorant, antiasthmatic, stomachic, analgesic, and antirheumatic. In some studies, the plant has been shown to check the growth of the bacillus responsible for tuberculosis, and Romany have used the herb as a calmative for panicked horses. Its most commonly referenced medicinal quality in ancient literature is as a pulmonary herb.

In magical operations, Elecampane is used for love, attraction, beneficence, peace, exorcism, and as a ward against noxious spirits. In planetary correspondence, the powers of the herb are resonant with the Sun, Mercury, and Venus. An ancient protocol of root-gathering required that Elecampane be harvested in complete silence.



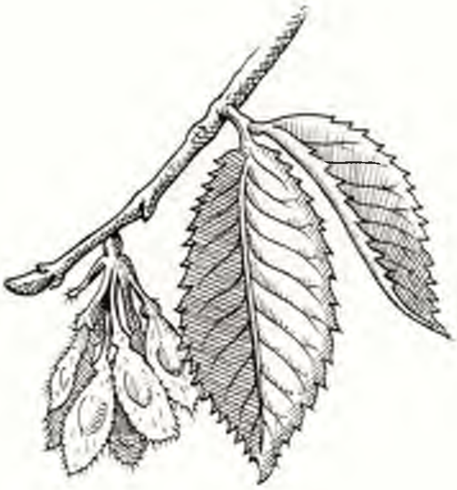
In its Venusian affect, it has long been regarded as a love amulet and aphrodisiac. An ancient potent love-drawing powder was made from two parts each of ground Elecampane and Vervain, and one part leaves of Mistletoe. A tiny pinch of this powder was then added to the food or drink of the one desired.

> While fasting, pluck one flower in the Feast of St. John in June, before sunrise, to dry, and then powder it with ambergris. Wear this upon your heart for nine days, and subsequently attempt to kiss the person you wish to be loved by, and the effect will follow.
>
> *Le Petit Albert*, 1752

In England, the plant's name was Elfwort or Elf-grass, and it was used as a strong magical remedy for bewitched cattle. In Santeria, Elecampane is sacred to Obatala, the Pure White King.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Love, Potentiation, Protection.
Planets: Sun, Mercury, Venus.
Element: Air.
Deific Forms: Chiron.
Star: Procyon (α Canis Minoris).
Realm: Elphame.
Body Part: Sensorium.
Therapeutic: Self-Compassion.
Affliction: Arrogance.
Emblem: A physician wearing a Mask of the Sun, holding a medicinal root.



ELM

Ulmus spp.
Ulmaceæ (Elm Family)

THE GENUS *Ulmus* encompasses 18 different Elm tree species, stately in appearance, Saturnian in affinity, and deciduous in seasonal proclivity. Reaching a maximum height of 40 meters, Elm bark is rough and fissured, the leaves serrate, the flower stamens red, engendering winged fruits with a central seed. Once a dominant tree in prehistoric times, *Ulmus* species both wild and tame have been ravaged by Dutch Elm Disease, with certain species being more succeptible than others. Arborists and plant pathologists have been hard at work for nearly a century locating hardy, immune individuals for breeding programs; several resistant cultivars are available, but none have total immunity.

The ancient Greeks associated the Elm with Orpheus. In the lore of the Northern Europe, and in other parts of the continent, it is believed that the Elm tree was the ancient female ancestor of humans, along with the male Ash.

The leaves of English Elm (*Ulmus procera*) have been used topically to treat hemorrhoids and other noxious swellings. The virtues of Slippery Elm (*Ulmus rubra*), long venerated in Native American medicine, are chiefly anti-tumor, anti-inflammatory, and laxative. This Elm is a renowned medicament; its inner bark has been used externally in the form of a poultice for tumors, swellings, gunshot wounds, burns and chilblains. The same bark is chewed to allay irritation in the throat.

Elm wood is hard, durable, and shock-resistant, and has been used for such applications as wood flooring. In North America, some Iroquois longhouses, used for gatherings of tribal elders, were made of Elm; other Native Americans used the wood of American Elm to make mortars for preparing medicines and perfumes.

Elm branches are occasionally employed for beating the bounds in Britain on Rogation Sunday (the fifth Sunday after Easter), for the blessing of crops and reaffirmation of land boundaries. A bough of Elm hung over the front door was used to drive away malign spirits and Elves.

In Russian folk magic, Red Elm is implicated in a charm against impotence: the man was to carry a staff of Red Elm into a field and with it strike a bull upon its horns. In Britain the Wychelm (*Ulmus montana*) was sometimes known as witch-elm due to its power over malign spirits.

The Spirit-Retinue of Elm

Solemnity, Mystery, Archaism, Evanescence, Perplexity, Innervation, Vengeance, Strict Countermeasure, Solemn Memory, Umbral Majesty, Shrouded Memory, Caliginous Shadow, and Cloistered Gloom.

EPHEDRA

Ephedra spp.
Ephedraceæ (Ephedra Family)

EPHEDRA is the sole genus of the Ephedra Family and comprises about 65 species of perennial shrubs and small trees inhabiting dry desert shrubland, arid mountains, canyons and alkali washes. It is of mostly cosmopolitan distribution (excluding Australia) and is adapted to drought, heat, and in some cases high altitude. Ephedra is noted for its conspicuous stems, having diminutive leaves which can be hard to discern. This gives rise to a twiggy silhouette, an appearance which has led to its vulgar name Straw Weed. The tiny fruits, red or orange in color, are referred to as cones. The classic species of Traditional Chinese Medicine is Ma Huang (E. *sinica*) and the noted North American species of ethnomedical import is Mormon Tea (*Ephedra nevadensis*). Ephedra plants, because of their unusual form, hardiness and ethnobotanical import, are excellent additions to dry rock gardens.

Its actions upon the human body are anti-asthmatic, diuretic, diaphoretic and stimulant. A vigorous brochiodilator, it is most efficacious as a respiratory aid. A Navajo treatment of venereal disease used a compound of Popotillo (*Ephedra trifurca*), wood rat hair, bat hair, buffalo hair, and charcoal. These ingredients were burnt together, and the afflicted person exposed their genitals to the smoke, which, in concentrated form, would cure the malady.

Ephedra species contain the important alkaloids ephedrine, pseudoephedrine, methylephedrine, norephedrine, methylpseudoephedrine, norpseudoephedrine, ephedroxane, ephedradines A, B, and C; as well as tannins, sapponins, and flavones. Active principles of Ephedra can pass readily into alcohol tincture, as well as into aqueous solution as a brewed tea. Used imprudently—especially solely as a stimulant—Ephedra can precipitate undesirable cardiovascular symptoms including arrhythmia and heart attack.

North American *Ephedra* species were employed as a stimulating beverage: the twigs were infused into a tea and the seeds ground to brew a coffee-like beverage. E. *california*, E. *nevadensis*, and E. *viridis* were so used by the indigenous Kawaiisu peoples of California, who also considered Ephedra charcoal to be the best for tattooing. For this latter purpose, the dark pigment was driven under the skin with spines from some types of desert thorns (*Tetradymia spp.*).

Ephedra species are aligned with the planetary virtues of Mercury, and with the occult powers of Gnosis and Enchanted Speech. In Italy, the dried aerial portions of *Ephedra major* are used for making traditional brooms.

Lignum Sancti Crucis and the Wood of Bloody Sacrifice

WOOD OF THE TRUE CROSS or Lignum Sancti Crucis is an ancient tradition of magical botany largely associated with Christianity and its Cult of Relics. In essence, the tradition ascribes sovereign magical power to fragments of the cross upon which Jesus was crucified. An abundance of churches are reputed to contain splinters of the original Roman cross, many of which are now enclosed in ornate shrines and reliquaries. A tradition of disseminating splinters of the cross to various dignitaries proliferated in the Middle

Ages, but relics of the Cross had been venerated in the Basilica of the Holy Sepulcher since the middle of the fourth century BCE.

Diverse magico-religious lore relates how the wood of the cross originated from particular trees. In Eastern Orthodox Christianity, the cross was made of the wood of three trees—Cedar, Fir, and Pine. Russian folklore identifies Cypress, together with Cedar and Olive, as the tree supplying the wood for the Cross of Crucifixion. In European lore, the trees upon which Christ died included Elder, Hawthorn, Aspen, and Mistletoe. According to the 13th century *Golden Legend* of Jacopo de Voraigne, the Cross was made from wood from a tree whose seed was planted in the mouth of Adam's corpse by his son Seth.

An abundance of Lignum Sancti Crucis relics exist in churches and monasteries the world over; of the few that have been examined in laboratories, most appear to be made of Olive wood. As a result of their attributions as the killing-tree, each of these trees and its wood may, according to tradition, possess blessed powers, or alternately fall under a retributive divine curse.

Other uses for the Lignum Sancti Crucis were for sovereign potions, these concocted by steeping small chips of the Cross in water and drunk, effecting miraculous cures. One such spell to gain power, nearer to the magical concerns of witchcraft, emerged from a Norwegian *svartebok* or black book, instructing the practitioner to "remove slivers of wood from the church door and place them in a nearby stream while reciting an oath to the powers of darkness." This recalls the East Anglian toad-bone ritual for gaining the devil's power by floating a certain bone of a ritually-killed toad in a brook by moonlight.

Consideration of which wood formed the cross must entail practicality. While Cedar and Cypress are exceptionally strong woods slow to decay and capable of supporting the weight of corpses, they are also expensive woods, used for the manufacture of furniture and finer civic and private buildings. Similarly, though pines are relatively inexpensive and easily procured, they are a soft wood which would not endure as long as Cedar and Cypress. It is likely that specific woods were preferred for the Cross, but also that executioners used whatever wood was most immediately available. As important as the exact botanical identity of the wooden fragments, however, is the powerful cult of veneration which accumulated around them, and the powerful mystical glamour they emanated. This was potentiated by the emergence of the artifact through a mystical formula of birth, life, death, and resurrection. Born first of the Womb of Nature, the tree was then felled, saturated in the blood of the incarnate god, then concealed in temples and worshipped for many centuries. Thus, the occult meaning of the Wood of the True Cross must necessarily encompass the mystical union of the powers of Goddess, Man, God, and Tree.

A kindred tradition, particularly in England, is aligned with Christ's crown of thorns. Three trees of arduous harrowing—Blackthorn, Whitethorn, and Purging Buckthorn—were said to have originally made their way to the Holy Isle from twigs taken from the excruciating chaplet of Jesus. Like Lignum Sancti Crucis, fragments of the thorny crown, or even small pieces of these woods aligned with it, were powerful talismans in Christian sorcery.

Less well known are the traditions which hold that the murderous tree of crucifixion was none other than the otherwise benevolent Apple tree. According to folklorist Margaret Baker, in areas where this belief existed, some orchards were cruciform in shape.

ERYNGO

Eryngium maritimum

Apiaceæ (Dill Family)

SEA HOLLY, as Eryngo is known, is an umbelliferous herb with glaucous, fleshy leaves, goring to 70 cm in height. Its assertive thistle-like flowers are a dark, iridescent blue, and the plant thrives in sunny areas, sand dunes and rock gardens. Though native to Europe, it has become naturalized along the northeast coast of North America. Eryngo resonates with the planetary attributes of Saturn, and in magical operations it is used in rites binding, coercion, attraction and love-charms.

Traditions of aphrodisiac power attend on the herb; in some Greek traditions of antiquity, this plant was worn by women to attract men. Sappho so used the sprigs of our herb to sway the love of a boatman with whom she was smitten.

An old English love-spell employed ground root of Eryngo, sprinkled in the food of the one desired. According to Plutarch, if a goat ate

Eryngo she became magically transfixed, and in this state so fascinated the entire herd.

The old Welsh magico-medical corpus *The Physicians of Myddfai* lists a formula for a sleeping potion compounded of Opium and seed of Eryngo, and fashioned into pills.

ESCALLONIA

Escallonia spp.
Escalloniaceæ (Escallonia Family)

KNOWN as the Redclaws, the genus *Escallonia* is comprised of 47 species of trees and shrubs from 1–10 meters in height, native to the temperate zones of the Americas, with particular species concentrations in South America. The leaves are often glossy, resinous, and aromatic; the flowers range from magenta to pink, purple, lavender, and white. There are many cultivars used for landscaping, as a hardy, attractive hedge shrub.

In Andean magical traditions, the leaves of Chuque (*Escallonia pendula*) are used against malefic sorcery and evil spirits, particularly in the form of a bath. The white-flowered Chachacomo (*E. resinosa*), a Peruvian species, is rich in ethnobotanical significance, yielding dye, fiber, wood and medicine. Its wood was used by the Inca and Quechua to fashion ceremonial drinking vessels called *kero*. This particular species is conspicuous by the curry-like scent of its leaves.

Ritually, the fragrant leaves and flowers may be used for strewing, or for concentrating their aroma into high-proof alcohol as a ritual perfume. As it is a widely-available, but little appreciated, horticultural plant, I recommend it as a hedge planting to those seeking an attractive, fragrant ritual botanical that requires little upkeep, yet which produces abundant plant material. A cultivar common to California and the Pacific Northwest is *Escallonia* × *exoniensis*.

EVERLASTING

THE evocative name *Everlasting* has been applied to at least two dozen species of plant, many coming from the Asteraceae or Sunflower Family. The colors and shapes of these flowers vary widely, and many are fragrant. Many carry magical associations of longevity or immortality. Certain Everlastings have traditions of use in magic and ceremony, but information on many others in this regard is scant.

The power almost all Everlastings seem to hold in common is their virtue of drying easily and remaining preserved and colorful for a lengthy period of time –sometimes for hundreds of years, hence their name. No doubt these virtues of keeping gave rise in part to the plants' association with the powers of immortality. Some Everlastings, such as *Gypsophila* or Baby's Breath, are used as magical charms to ensure fertile marriages. Below is a partial list of Everlastings, according to vulgar name and botanical name.

TWELVE EVERLASTINGS

Golden Thistle *Centaurea macrocephala*	Starflower *Scabiosa stellata*
Sweet Everlasting *Pseudonaphalium obtusifolium*	Life Everlasting *Gnaphalium plantaginifolia*
Cupid's Dart *Catanache caerula*	Immortelle *Xeranthemum anuum*
Baby's Breath *Gypsophila paniculata*	Yellow Ageratum *Lonas annua*
Strawflower *Helichrysum bracteatum*	Sandflower *Ammobium alatum*
Acrolinium *Helipterum rosea*	Love-Lies Bleeding *Amaranthus caudautus*

Flowers and leaves of Sweet Everlasting (*Pseudognaphalium obtusifolium*), also known as Rabbit Tobacco, are perhaps the most magically potent of this loose confederation. Possessed of a haunting maple-like scent, the herb has enjoyed a reputation as powerful plant of earthing among the Menomini peoples of North America. When a person has fainted, a smudge made from the dried foliage is smoldered and simultaneously blown into the nostrils. A similar smoke is employed for sending troublesome, earth-bound ghosts of the dead on their way. In Tibet, another Everlasting is noted for the powerful effects of its smoke: *Anaphalis nepalensis*. There it is used as both a tobacco substitute and as a kindling material.

EYEBRIGHT

Euphrasia officinalis

Orobanchaceæ (Broomrape Family)

EYEBRIGHT is an annual herb growing to 0.5 meters, with downy, oval-shaped leaves and racemes of tiny flowers with a yellow-pink fringe and red veins. The flower interiors contain a dark spot which ancient herbalists likened to the pupil of the eye, hence its names, esoteric applications, and alignments by way of the Doctrine of Signatures. Its habitat of preference is a chalky soil, or those contributing a good deal of sand; it populates heaths, meadows, and other sunny places. Many species in the wild are vulnerable, thus sowing seed for the garden, though the plant is challenging, is worthwhile.

The genus *Euphrasia* contains about 450 species, characterized as facultative parasites, their preferred hosts being alpine meadow grasses, from which they obtain nutrients. Its generic name is derived from Euphrosyne, or Gladness, one of the three Charites of the ancient Greeks. Eyebright was celebrated by Edmund Spenser, and its esoteric association with the archangel Michael is elucidated in Milton's *Paradise Lost*:

> *Michael from Adam's eyes the film removed,*
> *Which the false fruit, that promised clearer sight,*
> *Had bred; then purged with euphrayse and rue*
> *The visual nerve, for he had much to see.*

The herb's effects upon the flesh are antiseptic, anti-inflammatory, digestive, and a tonic bitter. It supports the mucous membranes and has been used for clearing afflictions of the eyes, such as the foul granulations of conjunctivitis. Eyebright has also been used as a cosmetic eyewash to promote an attractive glistening of the eyes. An infusion may also be used as a specific for the treatment of spleen, gall bladder and stomach vagaries. Although long used as an eye treatment by folk doctors and homeopaths, the plant has for some time been roundly rejected by official pharmacy. However, recent research (Novy, et al. 2015) has detected antimicrobial activity in the plant's essential oil, with specific action upon bacteria and fungi known to infect the eye.

In planetary correspondence, Eyebright is most often aligned with the Sun due to its association with light, vision, and its suffix 'bright'. Its strong association with the human eye, as well as its beneficial alliance to that organ, aligns it with such ritual operations of 'awakening' or 'revelation' as mirror or crystal-gazing, and the attunement of vision in trance states. For this, the traditional infusion made from the fresh flower is best, applied to the eyelids, forehead, and the object employed for scrying. Its power of protection of the eyes also suggests apotropaic use as a protector from the *malocchio* or Evil Eye. In Poland, Eyebright is one of a retinue of flowers incorporated into Assumption Day bouquets. The whole herb of Indian Eyebright (*Euphrasia himalayica*), when dried, is used as a ritual incense in Nepal.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF EYEBRIGHT

Lucidity, Attenuation, Conspicuousness, Acumen,
Foresight, Evulsion, Rectification, Illusion,
Apparition, Fancy, Broadened Vista,
Bright Epiphany, and
Ignis Fatuus.

⁂

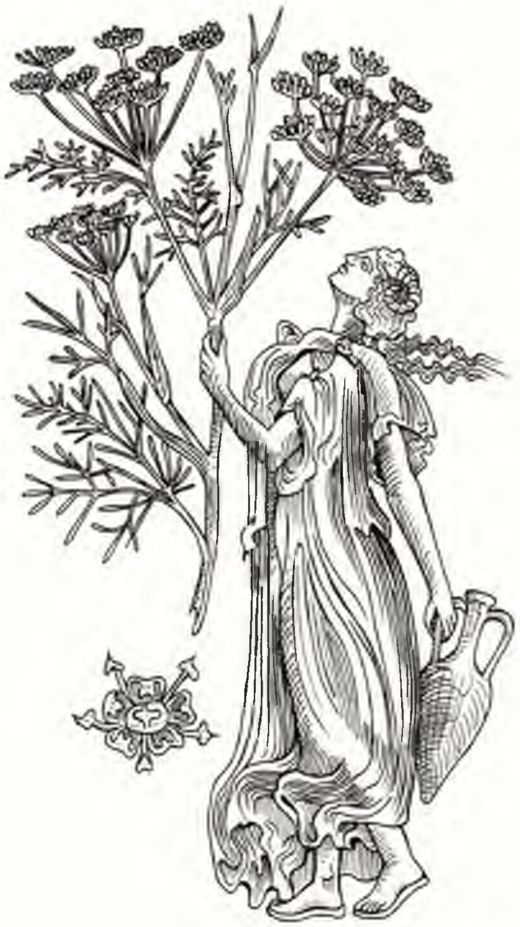
FENNEL

Foeniculum vulgare

Apiaceæ (Dill Family)

COMMON Fennel is a stately biennial or perennial growing to 2 meters with feathery, capillary-like foliage and showy yellow umbels of flowers. Like Almond, there are two kinds of Fennel, sweet and bitter. Bitter fennel is most commonly a wild variety, botanically known as *F. vulgare* var. *amara*; and cultivated sweet Fennel is *F. vulgare* var. *dulce*. The entire plant when bruised relinquishes a most pleasing smell, reminiscent of anise, soil, wood, and black pepper. In California, where the Mediterranean climate evokes its endemic range, Fennel dominates roadsides and readily volunteers in the garden. In this promised land, the plant can become almost arboreal, with thick trunk-like stalks, some of which exploit cracks in pavement and can heave them over time. A hardy survivor, in situations where it is considered a weed, Fennel resists herbicides and even the violence of manual extraction.

Medicinally the plant possesses antimicrobial, carminative, digestive, anti-rheumatic, and hepatic principles. An infusion of the herb is traditionally used to allay indigestion and gross vapours of the intestines; and decoctions as a weapon against athsma and coughs; it is a frequent ingredient in gastric formulae and preparations for sweetening the breath. The power resides in the seed, root and leaf, and most dramatically in the essential oil of the seed. In large amounts, the oil, like that of Parsley, Dill and Anise, can generate what ethnobotanist William Emboden referred to as “epileptiform madness and hallucinations.” Bitter Fennel oil is, in this regard, more dangerous than the sweet. The magical philosophy of planetary herbalism accords Fennel with the characteristics of Mercury, Venus and Jupiter.



The ancients believed that reptiles nibbled Fennel to improve their eyesight, and the herb was indeed used in folk medicine for this purpose. Marsilio Ficino recommended daily use of the plant for strengthening the vision, the usual method was to eat a small portion of the leaves while a single seed was held in the mouth.

> *..find a girl who is healthy, beautiful, merry, well-tempered, and when you hunger, place your mouth at her breasts and draw their milk, at the waxing of the moon, and then immediately eat a bit of fennel powder thoroughly mixed with sugar syrup, that the syrup may impede the clotting and putrefaction of the milk in the belly; and the fennel, being subtile and lactophilic, will diffuse it a spread it through the members.*
>
> MARSILIO FICINO
> *De Religio Christiana*, 1568

Fennel has long possessed a reputation for purification and forcible delivery from demonic taint. The plant is mentioned in the old *Anglo Saxon Nine Herbs Charm* as as one of the sacred plants created by the Wise Lord. Antidote and mithridate formulae of the ninth-century *Book of Poisons* by Ibn Wahshiya al-Nabati make frequent use of Fennel seed. A 16th century magical brew from Lucca, composed of Fennel and Rue, was employed to treat persons bewitched or “crushed by the Dead”. As a medieval charm against fire and malefic sorcery, the herb was hung over doorways, especially on St. John’s Eve. Some spells employ Fennel seeds to keep away law enforcement, spies, or soldiers.

The Spirit-Retinue of Fennel

Fearless Confrontation, Decisive Action, Aromatic Savor, Freshness, Effervescence, Incitement, Revelry, Wondrous Occasion, Elevated Spirits, Aroused Flesh, Agitated Processions, Shimmying Motion, and Licentious Frenzy.

The Thyrsus, the sacred whipping-staff of ancient Dionysian rites, was a Fennel stalk topped with a cone of a conifer. Stalks of the plant were also used in the ecstatic rites of the Friulian *benandanti*, the sorcerers of the Italian alps who fought night-battles for fertility in the spirit-realm. In ancient Greece, celebrants of the Attic Mysteries donned wreaths of Fennel. Though lascivious in its magical potentials, the herb was occasionally ascribed the powers of chastity.

Where copious quantities of the fronds can be gathered, the plant serves well as a strewing herb, releasing an exhilarating, virid aroma when crushed. Though its aromatic principles degrade when combusted, they are readily preserved in tincture, or by essential oil extraction.

Tincture of Fennel.

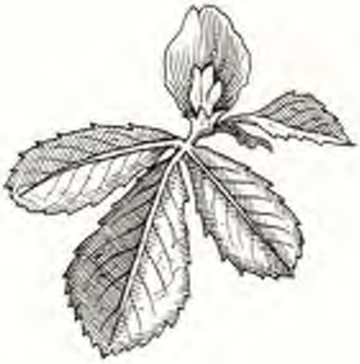
Fennel leaves, fresh	10 g
Fennel seeds, unripe	3 g
Fennel seeds, dry	7 g

275 ml. rectified spirit 75.5%

☾ The formulation is both sweet and highly aromatic, taking advantage of the complex chemical profile of the ripening plant, adding maturing parts progressively over time. Leaves of wild Fennel are placed in a steeping vessel for one month, followed by unripe and ripe seeds. The maceration proceeds for at least one month after the final plant matter has been added, then the whole is strained and decanted. In addition to its use as a meditational adjunct, it may also be used in small amounts as an ingredient in cocktails and aperitifs.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Exorcism, Purification, Fertility, Allure.
Planet: Mercury.
Element: Fire.
Deific Forms: Dionysos.
Virtue: Sacred Frenzy.
Asterism: The Pleiades.
Body Part: Alimentum.
Therapeutic: Kinesis.
Affliction: Lethargy.



FENUGREEK

Trigonella fœnum-grœcum

Fabaceæ (Pea Family)

NATIVE to the Mediterranean and southern Eurasia, Fenugreek is an annual legume growing to 0.5 meters, with trefoil leaves, white flowers, and a conspicuous, curved seed pod resembling a horn. The odorous seeds are a deep golden color, and though much valued as a culinary spice and a medicinal, the leaves and pods are also aromatic, and are sometimes used. The herb's name is a contraction of *fœnum-grœcum*, meaning 'Greek Hay'. Its close annual relative Blue Fenugreek (*T. caerulea*) is of like flavor, but milder, and is used in Georgia as a spice, as well as an important forage species for honeybees.

The crushed seed has been drunk in water to treat diabetes and preventing fevers, as well as alimentary complaints. Similarly, this pulverization is used as a poultice on abscesses in medical traditions of Sudan. Consumption of the seed as a tonic is used to scent the body perspiration like Maple syrup.

It is also regarded as an aphrodisiac, and a spirit-ally of women. Together with Argel (*Solenostema argel*) and Mahareb (*Cymbopogon nercitus*), Fenugreek is used to make a potent Sudanese fertility potion. In the ethnobotany of North Africa, it has also been valued as a galactagogue and uterine tonic. The seeds contain disogenin ($C_{27}H_{42}O_3$), a botanical steroid precursor of the human sex hormone progesterone.

In ancient Egypt, oil from the aromatic fruits were known as a sovereign restorative to the skin. One such formula, an ointment or salve for the face, is found in the Edwin Smith Surgical Papyrus, in a subsection entitled *Book of Transforming an Old Man into a Youth*. Theophrastus reports a popular Greek aromatic ointment called *telinon*, of which Fenugreek was a principal ingredient.

Among the planetary eminences, it is classically aligned with Jupiter and Venus. Its occult properties are Potentiation, Purification, and attraction. It is also an ingredient in love charms, skin washes, and perfumes, as well as rituals of dispelling evil spirits by means of seed-scattering. In India, Fenugreek is considered an auspicous plant sacred to Kali.

FERNS

THE botanical class Polpodiopsida, containing all Ferns, is comprised of some 10,500 species. They are an ancient and stalwart vascular plant type, predating the emergence of flowering plants and continuing to evolve new species after they arose. Though commonly perceived as confined to moist, shady forest, ferns populate a great diversity of habitats. In Hawai'i for example, ferns are early colonizers of hardened lava flows, where few other species can take root. Important fern genera in magic and folklore include:

Ophioglossum: Adder's Tongues, so named for the resemblance of the spore stalk emerging from a snake's mouth.

Botrychium: Moonworts, famous for their power over metals.

Adiantum: The Maidenhairs, known for their gracile morphology and presence. As a group, they are alinged with the planet Venus and her attributes.

Asplenium: The Spleenwort ferns, including such individuals well known to folklore as Hart's Tongue.

Pteridium: Including the Brakes and Bracken ferns, important for their taslimanic function protecting from lightning.

Dryopteris: The Male Ferns, important in folk medicine and talismanic magic.

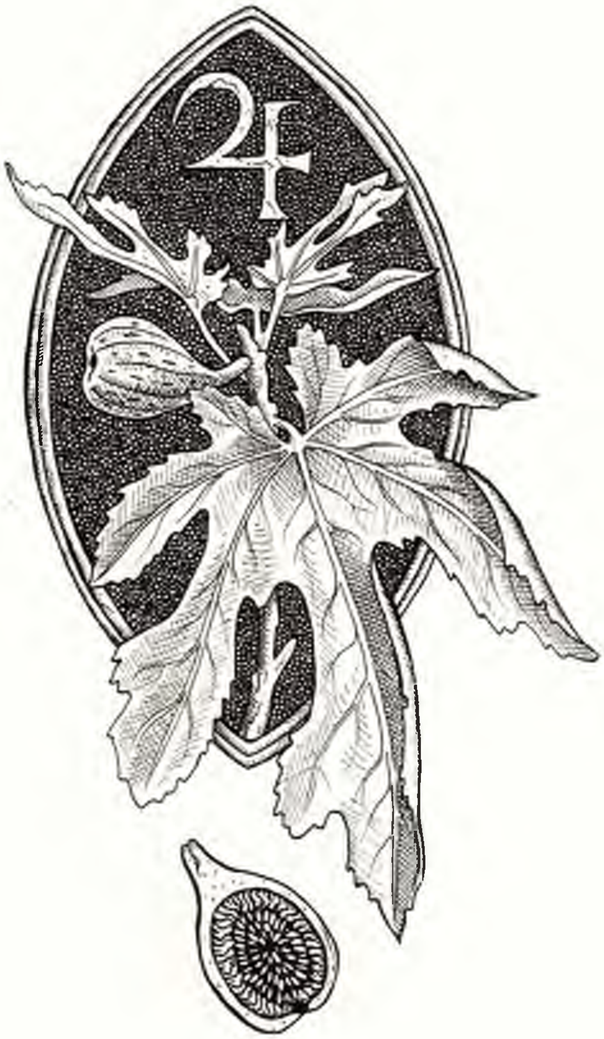
Polypodium: The Rock Cap ferns, which includes the beloved Licorice Fern (*Polypodium glycyrrhiza*), a deciduous fern with a powerfully sweet rhizome.

Platycerium: The Staghorn ferns, known for their unusual antler-shaped fronds.

> The fern avoids and shrinks back from any home or place where the devil resides... Magic and incantations of demons—as well as Diabolic words and other phantasms—avoid a person who is carries a fern with him.
>
> HILDEGARD OF BINGEN
> *Physica*, 1158

The South Tyrolean sorcerer Mathias Perger, also known as Der Lauterfresser, was alleged to have made charms from the feather of a white goose, stuffed with Fern seed and wax. The amulet was used to make its owner successful in litigation. Though Perger was executed in 1645 as a witch after severe torture, much of the material in his confessions, as well as legends told of him, reflect more of the strata of Alpine folk magic than typical inquisitorial accounts of the witches' Sabbat.

In folklore, uprooting a fern was said to cause madness, or foul weather.



FIG

Ficus carica; Ficus spp.
Moraceæ (Mulberry Family)

ENDEMIC to the Middle East, the Edible Fig is a smooth-barked tree with palmate leaves and an edible, many-seeded fruit which arises due to a symbiotic relationship with a tiny wasp pollinator. With a spreading crown, it grows to 10 meters, though there are some dwarf cultivars. In climates where it thrives, it produces an abundance of edible fruit, hence its biblical praise as one of the abundant fruits of Canaan. Its principal powers in magical and occult usage are Love, Fertility, and Death.

The genus *Ficus* contains 830 species of trees, shrubs and lianas with mostly tropical distribution. Figs of various species, originally used in Florida gardens as ornamentals, have now escaped into wildlands, including Everglades National Park and become invasive. The principal offender among these is the Indian Laurel Fig (*Ficus microcarpa*), but some other fig species have also featured on banned plant rosters for various Florida counties, including the Council Tree (*Ficus altissima*) and the Banyan (*Ficus bengalensis*). This action of spreading and perpetuation is common to the genus and testifies to its magical associations with fecundity and virility, as does its opaque, milky sap, which is an irritant to human skin.

The Edible Fig is dioecious, and so trees may be either male of female; male trees are known as *caprifigs*. The sylvicultural term *caprification* refers to the act of artificially pollinating female Fig trees by introducing flowering branches from a male. The females are then pollinated by fig wasps, the pollen borne on the bodies of larvæ.

Medieval Arabian folk medicine used compresses of pulverized fig to draw venom out of spider bites; another ancient remedy against insect venom was a strong decoction of fruit of the Fig compounded in a water-wine mixture. In Southern Arabia and Yemen, *Ficus cordata*, known by the name *athab*, produces seeds used for oral anæsthesia, and as an aromatic used in incense and perfume.

In the Fig we bear witness to a love-death axis of occult power. The Cyrenians crowned themselves with fig-wreaths when sacrificing to Saturn, and the mask of Dionysus of Naxos was carved from its wood. To destroy items considered foul, polluted, hideous, or of otherwise ill omen, the ancient Pythagoreans stoked fires of Black Fig wood. Together with Elder, Fig also bears the sinister legacy of the Judas Tree, that accursed arbor upon whose boughs Christ's betrayer hung himself.

The tree is connected in ancient traditions to the underworld and to chthonian deities: lore from the Isle of Bougainville tells that on the path to the underworld, there stands a Sycamore Fig (*Ficus sycamorus*), whose voluminous roots and stems contain the souls of the unborn. In North America, Hoodoo lore from South Carolina relates that one can go to a Fig tree at midnight on Christmas and hear the discarnate shades of Adam and Eve bickering amongst the branches; other stories from the same body of magical knowledge relate that it is a great danger to cut a Fig tree, for such an act will provoke a death in the family.

Among the Lhota, a tribal headhunting people of the Naga Hills in Assam, heads of enemies were kept at a head-tree or Mingetung, usually a magnificent *Ficus* which grew in the center of the village. Fertility rites were conducted beneath its boughs, under which the heads of enemeies were offered, and the health of the tree determined the well-being of the village. A 3rd or 4th millenium BC seal found in Mohenjodaro, Pakistan testifies to the ancient worship of Aswattha (*Ficus Religiosa*).

Bark from a wild Mexican Fig yields a brown paper for the making of enchanted dolls; traditionally used for destructive and baneful magic. The paper made for the Pre-columbian Maya codices was made from two native species, *F. padifolia* and *F. goldmanii*. Wood of the Boddhi Tree (*Ficus religiosa*) is used for beads of the Buddhist *mala*.

In Palestine, it is considered foolhardy to sleep under a Fig, for the demon Maskun inhabited its leaves. Cornish lore relays a tradition that those who prune or harm a Fig will receive a death-curse from the inflicted tree. In several Voodoo spells, the root of the tree is used to cause illness.

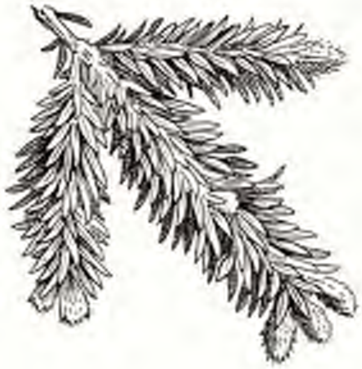
THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF FIG

Sustenance, Shapeliness, Flirtation, Indulgence,
Demand, Proflicacy, Gravidity, Anointed Flesh,
Virile Swelling, Wrested Control, Hideous
Warning, Infernal Incursion,
and Sinister Eroticism.

As well as having associations of death and sinister magic, the Fig has an understandably erotic component. When not engaged in carnal pursuits, the Satyrs were known to languish beneath Fig Trees; in ancient Greece, the word *sykon* (fig) was a colloqialism for vagina. In Dionysian rites, Fig wood was employed for the construction of ritual phalli; both the Fig and Phallus were carried in ancient processions in honor of Bacchus. The Egyptian goddesses Nut and Hathor -as well as Osiris—are both associated with the Sycamore Fig (*Ficus sycamorus*). The wood of the Fig was also employed in antiquity to carve ithyphallic fetishes of the god Priapos. As an aphrodisiac, the bark of *Ficus religiosa* is boiled in milk and used as a sexual stimulant. The Kikuyu and Kamba peoples of Kenya smear the juices of sacred Fig trees on a barren woman's body to bring fertility.

In Candomblé, *Figas* are fetishes carved in the shape of a clenched fist, utilized for protection from the Evil Eye, deriving from the ancient 'Gesture of the Fig', dating back as far as Roman times and perhaps prior. Among the faithful of Candomblé, some large Fig trees are known to house the spirit of the *orixá* Iroko, the ancient arboreal ancestor.

CORRESPONDENCES
Powers: Fertility, Death, Allure.
Planets: Jupiter, Saturn, Venus.
Elements: Earth and Water.
Deific Forms: Nymphs, Dionysos, Demeter, Hermes, Priapus, Iroko.
Body Part: Genitals.
Therapeutic: Anasyrma.
Affliction: Shame.
Gesture: *Manus Obscena.*



FIR

Abies spp.
Pinaceæ (Pine Family)

ABIES, being the genus of True Firs, is comprised of about 50 species of conifers widely distributed in the northern hemisphere, growing from 10 to 80 meters in height, and having erect cones. Medicinally, it is a balsamic, expectorant, and a bronchial sedative, its resin occasionally included in formulae of old-time cough syrups. In indigenous North American medicine, the Shoshone steeped needles and resinous blisters of *Abies lasiocarpa* to treat colds. In planetary correspondence, the tree resonates the attributes of Jupiter.

The portions used are the bark, pitch, needles, branches, cones, and pollen. Although the heartwood is unsuitable as construction timber, it does retain aromatic qualities, and can be used for incense. The Canadian Balsam of commerce is *Abies balsamea*; essential oil of Canadian Balsam is extracted by steam distillation from the oleoresin. Sometimes this product is called 'Fir Needle Oil.'

North America is blessed with a bounty of endemic Fir species, and they were used extensively in ancient Native American magic and ceremony. The Kwakiutl employed the pollen in purification rites and ceremonies, and the Blackfoot sprayed chewed Fir needles over ceremonial containers to purify them. Branches were used to chase noxious spirits and ghosts by the Nez Perce; the Cheyenne esteemed Fir leaves used in ceremonial cleansing, usually burned on coals, with or without Sweet Grass, to expunge sickness.

The Oyamel or Sacred Fir (*Abies religiosa*) of Mexico was used by the Aztecs in bloodletting rites. As described by Bernardino de Sahagún, the *acxoyatemaliztli*, or act of placing the fir branches before the gods, was a complex rite resembling penance in some ways, and involved the offering of blood drawn from the knees, using sharp maguey spines. *Acxoyatl* was the spirituous emanation of this Fir, and was related to the goddess-emanant *Acxoyatl Cihuatl*, or Sacred Fir Woman.

Firs retain their hallowed status in some northern European countries and Russia, where they are regarded as indwelt by forest genii; and some woodcutters refuse to fell them. One of the surviving pre-Christian pagan rites of Romania is that of *posthumous betrothals* or the ritual marriage of someone who has died young to a living mate. Sometimes this mate is a person, but often it is either a lance or a Fir tree. A European charm against nightmares employs a fresh green branch of Balsam Fir (*Abies balsamea*) laid on the pillow; a branch hung over the barn door keeps repulsive spirits from stealing grain.

In all places where Fir species grow, diverse portions of the tree have long been prized for the fragrant smoke they yield up, for both magic and medicine. Its balsamic, pinene and citrus-laden aroma provides a brightening influence and is also an excellent adjunct to ritual incense where meditation and trance-inception is desired. In North America, boughs of the Grand Fir (*Abies grandis*) were burned for a healing suffumigation by the Nitinaht of British Columbia, while the Cheyenne and Montana peoples burnt twigs and needles for expulsion of noxious spirits.

Although sometimes classed as a Tree of Saturn, its characteristics, being warm, restorative, purifying, and offertory, align more favorably with the Sun. Its magical pinciples are Healing, Exorcism, Protection from Foul Spirits, and Allure.

Fir Incense.

¶ For the aromatic expression of Fir through the vehicle of fire and smoke, a simple loose incense utilizing *Abies balsamea* is compounded from three parts resin, one part pulverized cone or sawdust, and one part dried needles, burnt on hot rocks or charcoal. This basic formulation can and should be applied to all species of Fir and adjusted as in accord with aromatic virtue.

FLAX

Linum usitatissimum; *Linum* spp.
Linaceæ (Flax Family)

AN ANNUAL cultivated plant growing to 1.3 meters, with slender stalks and pale blue flowers. Flax fiber has traditionally been used for the manufacture of clothing textiles, particularly linen, as well as paper, twine, and ropes. It is a cultigen, and therefore not found in the wild, attesting to an ancient communion with humanity: archaeological finds of spun and dyed Flax fiber in eastern Europe have been carbon dated to a stunning 30,000 years before the common era. Flaxseed is also nutritive as a human food, and when pressed provides a fine, polymerizing oil valued in art and industry. The artistic medium of oil painting has long relied on Flax for its basis, as both the canvas and the thickening oil originate with the plant.

The genus *Linum* contains at least 108 recognized species, but taxonomy is complex, and many more need to be assessed. In North America, a prevalent native exemplar is *Linum lewisii*, a widely-distributed species often seen in xeric plant communities, such as the Colorado Pinyon-Juniper woodland, where its ethereal blue dots the landscape. The plant has some use in folk medicine as a demulcent, anti-rheumatic, and vulenary. In North America, the Shoshone tribe employed *L. lewisii*, as a peerless eye medication.

Its powers in occult practice are diverse, including Fertility, Love-Charms, Divination, Wealth, and Necromancy. Two separate formulae from the ancient spell-hoard of Greek Magical Papyri made use of Flax leaves for necromantic oracles derived from corpses. The first, entitled *Pitys the Thessalian's Enquiry of a Corpse*, compels a cadaver to speech by the insertion of Flax leaf inscribed with *voces magicae* into its mouth. After compounding a magical ink from "red ochre, burnt Myrrh, juice of fresh Wormwood, evergreen and Flax", the magician writes the words AZEL BALEMACHO on a Flax leaf and places it in the corpse's mouth prior to questioning. The second spell was used for discovering a thief. Considerably more complex, it required inhumation of the head of a drowned man, and flax planted on top of it. When mature, the Flax plant was harvested and the head excavated, washed in milk, and wrapped. The Flax leaves were then used in a knot-spell: the plant was invoked and the suspect's name uttered twice before tying the plant in a knot. As the knot was drawn, it would compel the suspect to speak aloud.

Several ritual traditions have constellated around the sprinkling of Flax seeds upon the earth, either to render it fruitful, or to drive off ghosts and malevolent sprites. Curiously, an old Norwegian spell for constraining the spirits of those who haunt after death involves sprinkling Flax seeds about the homestead or in the coffin with the deceased. This dual power of commanding and restraining the corpse reveals a strong necromantic complex within the plant, and the Norwegian spell also participates in the phenomenon of seed-scattering magic, a general feature of which is to confound spirits by occupying them with counting. In the traditions of American Hoodoo magic, Flax seeds are cast upon the ground in charms for confusing or trapping evil spirits.

In Europe, the plant is strongly associated with feminine mysteries, and in particular the arts of spinning and weaving. In the folklore of the Tyrol, Flax was sacred to the great goddess Hilda, who taught the art of weaving to mortals. In the Pyrenees, women perform a rustic 'witches' dance' in which they flirt or simulate copulation with the plant, revealing their vulvas to the herb. Elsewhere, rites of this nature are also recorded. According to the folk traditons of Provence, the fairies who appear in the home on the nights of December 31 and January 1 also preside over the arts of spinning Flax and Hemp. Some ancient Scandinavian tribes also sacrificed Flax to appease the gods.

In the folk magic of Pomerania, Flax seeds, together with salt, dill and caraway, were used as preventatives against witchcraft. A German charm for driving evil spirits away from an infant requires the sprinkling of Flax seed upon the baby, who is laid out on the ground. As the seeds took root, the illness departed.

Flax seed and seed of Fleawort (*Plantago* spp.), powdered together and taken as a snuff, have ancient magical repute as a bringer of prophetic dreams.

The Spirit-Retinue of Flax

Provision, Surety, Handicraft, Wardship, Restraint,
Succor, Foison, Dissemination, Courtship,
Fecundity, Local Commerce,
Fructified Earth, and
Divine Virility.

* * *

Seeds of Power, and their Dispersion

A PERSISTENT but little-examined ritual of exorcism or confounding demonic entities lies in the folkloric corpus of *seed-scattering charms*. By this method, a quantity of seeds, usually tiny, are broadcast in an area thought to be haunted, or vulnerable to demonic intrusion. The charm-type is often found in association with the undead, or 'earthbound' spirits, being the ghosts of the decently deceased who continually obsess on their former incarnative states.

In Belarus, this method was used as a magical prophylactic to keep the corpses of dead sorcerers, drowning victims, and rich men from walking. Seeds of Wild Poppy were sprinkled about the exhumed corpse, which was dismembered and re-buried; another variant of the charm from the same region merely scatters the seeds about the revenant's grave, house, and the churchyard.

In another instance, an old Norwegian spell contained within *The Black Books of Elverum*, earthbound spirits constrained by sprinkling flax seeds in the homestead, or in the coffin with the deceased.

Seeds Strewn for Power

PLANT	BOTANICAL	REGION	USE
Mustard	*Sinapis* spp.	India	demonifuge
Flax	*Linum usitatissimum*	Norway	corpse-binding
Poppy	*Papaver* spp.	Eastern Europe	anti-vampire
Millet	*Pennisetum glaucum*	Eastern Europe	anti-vampire
Butterdock	*Rumex* spp.	Britain	love-divination
Black Pepper	*Piper nigrum*	Eastern USA	unbewitching
Hemp	*Cannabis sativa*	England, Ireland Channel Islands	love divination
Flax	*Linum usitatissimum*	Scotland	love divination

Where the undead are concerned, the ontological basis of such spells is thought to lie in the vampire's legendary attribute of *arithmomania*—an outfleshed obsessive-compulsive disorder, characterized by preoccupation with counting, an obsession with numbers. In some instances, lore accompanying such rites relates that the offending spirit will be ensnared in the act of counting the seeds, and thus bound by its own obsession.

Other seed-scattering charms relate to love-divination, where seeds, such as Hemp, are strewn about, invoking the spirit of one's future beloved. Numerous forms of this are attested across Britain, but a sample charm proclaims:

Hemp seed I sow
Hemp seed I hoe,
And he that is my true love
Come after me and mow.

Accounts of the charm relate that the spectral appearance of the invoked readily manifests. Amongst the places the rite is performed are the crossroads, at midnight, and sometimes on Halloween, all being 'in between' states susceptible to interpenetration of the worlds of matter and spirit. As a love-divination, the seed's natural power appropriately invokes fertility, and the sexual act of insemination. This abundant saturation fertility and nascent life also accounts for its use in oppositional magic against the undead.

FLEABANE

Erigeron spp.
Asteraceæ (Sunflower Family)

FLEABANE is a hardy, creeping herb with daisy-like flowers, short in stature and well attuned to neglect, often having fragrant leaves. Its genus *Erigeron* is formidable, with over 475 accepted species, with near-cosmopolitan distribution. Its name was derived from its former use as an insecticide. The herb's actions on the body, specifically the skin, are anti-inflammatory, astringent, and hemostatic. As a powerful stypic, it was used in official medicine until relatively recently in the forms of tincture, infusion, decoction and essential oil (or the undifferentiated 'volatile oil').

It is aligned with the Lunar emanation, and its occult potencies are exorcism, protection from maleficia, healing, and good fortune in hunting. In most places where the plant evolved, human interaction seemed to recognize its power against evil, whether afflicting the spiritual or corporeal vessel. William Coles, in his 1656 classic *The Art of Simpling*, reported that Fleabane seeds strewn among the sheets provoked chastity.

Before the influx of the Europeans, many Fleabane species were regarded as power plants by the indigenous peoples of North America. Common preparations were infusions of the leaves, used to wash the head and body, or using the dried leaves as a suffumigant. Generally, Fleabanes were esteemed effective against poisons, whether from snakebite or sorcery.

Spreading Fleabane (E. *divergens*) was employed by the Navajo, who used it as a consecrative plant, and as a ceremonial cure for afflictions brought on by lightning strike. It was also made into an infusion and applied as a topical against witchcraft and burned as a ceremonial fumigant. The Kiowa regarded the same plant as auspicious and used it as a good luck charm.

The alpine meadow dwelling Sprucefir Fleabane (E. *eximus*) was employed as a hunting charm, and an infusion used on the body as a protection against *maleficia*. Trailing Fleabane (E. *flagellaris*) was another species valued as a ceremonial fumigant.

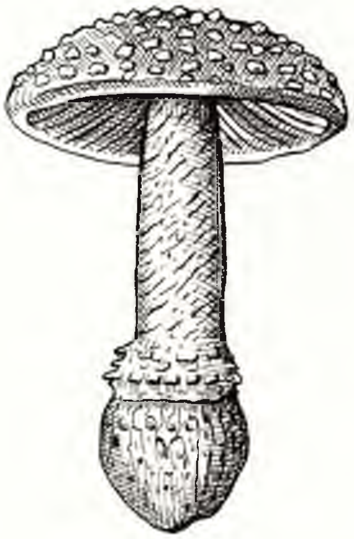
Fleabane was also used in Central Europe as protection from witchcraft; a primary species was Blue Fleabane (*Erigeron acer*), which was used in Estonia as a fortune-telling plant. In Silesia, it was a rancher's charm to protect cattle herds from witches. In *Three Books of Occult Philosopy*, Agrippa documents an incense compounded from the seeds of Fleabane and Flax, and the roots of Violets and Parsley, which allowed the operator to behold the future.

FLY AGARIC

Amanita muscaria
Amanitaceæ (Amanita Family)

APPEARING as a regular fixture of European fairy tales, the Fly Agaric is a mushroom of arresting appearance, having a bright crimson cap with white flakes or dots, a white stipe, and attaining a maximum height of 20 cm. with the mature cap being 8–20 cm. in diameter. By preference it inhabits in northern temperate and boreal coniferous forest, associated with Birch, Pine and Larch communities, and appears during rainy seasons. It is also allied with the arboreal communities of Beech and Fir.

In accordance with its astonishing outward aspect, the mushroom is a storehouse of powerful toxins capable of radically disrupting consciousness and altering the human organism. North American species of A. *muscaria* are considered medicinally inferior to those in Eurasia, and the related tan-colored species A. *pantherina*, which possesses similar virtues, is occasionally substituted. In North America have encountered large Fly Agaric specimens as far south as the 38th parallel, in the coastal forests of California, principally associated with native Pine species.



The centers of ritual Fly Agaric use of were Siberia, Finland, and the Baltics. The primary traditional magical uses of the hallowed mushroom were fourfold: divination, communication with spirits, diagnosis or treatment of illness, and inception of estatic states. The mushroom was used by the Ostyak shamans to communicate with the gods, and the Chukchi peoples, who know it as *wapak*, consulted it as an ancestral sacrament. Use was also reported by the Sámi sorcerers, who placed especial import on mushrooms bearing seven spots. The shamanic tradition of mushroom use survives to this day in Central Siberia and the Kamchatka Peninsula, though its legacy has been much diminished due to Soviet and post-Soviet repression.

The chief psychoactive principle is muscimol, with ibotenic acid and muscazone also important. For use as a visionary sacrament, the mushroom is collected and sun-dried, a process which converts ibotenic acid to muscimol. The visionary compounds may be passed through the urine intact several times, as many as 5 by some accounts. Fresh mushrooms have few visionary effects; indigenous Siberian peoples have prepared its flesh as a comestible by thinly slicing and boiling.

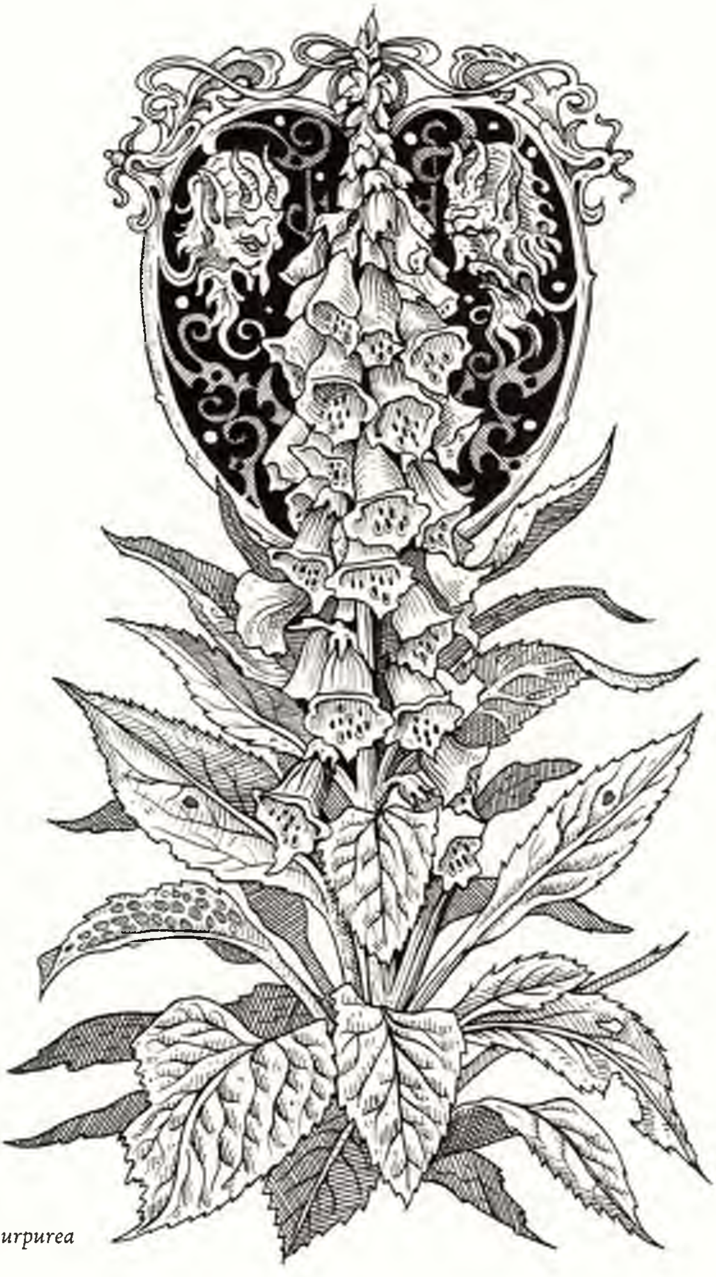
The estate induced by consumption of the mushroom may last up to 8 hours, depending on the individual constitution, potency of the the source material, and amount of the mushroom consumed. One may encounter and converse with ghosts, spirits, or deific forms; the loss of motor skills is common, as is hearing voices or strange music. There is also a profound transubstantiation of visual perception. Insects may become gargantuan, and mountains tiny, or insubstantial. As well as a fluctuating perception of space, the intoxication may incept a sense of the expansion and contraction of time—as well as finding oneself seemingly imprisoned within 'time-loops'. Overdose, though much-feared, is rare if the person is properly educated about proper mycological identification; substantiated deaths from Fly Agaric toxicity are rare. Indeed, when considering experiences reported by those who have eaten *Amanita* flesh, one is impressed by their diversity and range: some report a transcendent peace and serenity, while other recall an intrusive, suffocating horror approaching death.

The Spirit-Retinue of Fly Agaric

Phlogiston, Incandescence, Estrangement, Distortion, Fascination, Upheaval, Incongruity, Syncope, Distension, Rupture, Telluric Fire, Sanguine Frenzy, and Demoniac Fancy.

Few attempts have been made to place the Fly Agaric within the occult-planetary attributions of the Western Esoteric Tradition, but the aspects of three celestial bodies in particular converge within its arcanum. It may be confidently classed with Saturn, which typically governs poisons, death, ghosts, and the saprophytes the realm of organisms thriving on decaying matter, yet also recycling nutrients. Its effects upon the body, being 'hot' and likened so such concepts as combustion, swelling, and expansion, remind us of the war-maker Mars, as does its red color and bold, sometimes rough, usurpation of the body. Fly Agaric is also resonant with the Moon and its associated principles of distortion, inconstancy, witchcraft, and the spirit-realm, as does its especial relation, with water, a necessary part of the sacramental preparation. Its occult attributes are Illumination, Divination, Visions, and Necromancy.

Robert Graves proposed Fly Agaric as the ecstatic sacrament of the Dionysian maenads; Gordon Wasson famously suggested it as a candidate for the principal plant in the ancient intoxicating drink *Soma* of the Vedic tradition. The Philospher's Stone of Alchemy, legends of the Holy Grail, and the divine personages of Jesus Christ and Santa Claus have also been advanced as complexely-accreted mythologies of this mushroom and its ecstatic relationship with humankind, with varying degrees of plausibility (and audacity). These speculations, which can reach the level of obsession among some of their 'enthusiast' proponents, invite us to reflect on the Mushroom's power of *bamboozlement*. This aspect proceeds not from the biochemistry of Fly Agaric, but rather its penetration of human consciousness as an *idée fixe*, casting forth a great hall of mirrors in the minds of seekers. Even if the



Digitalis purpurea

veracity of the claim in question fails, the power of the mushroom to inspire such speculations is worthy of recognition, and, perhaps, praise as a kind of Muse chimerical.

FOXGLOVE

Digitalis purpurea, Digitalis lanata; Digitalis spp.
Scrophulariaceæ (Figwort Family)

DIGITALIS is a genus comprised of biennials, annuals, and perennials, with varying degrees of biochemical toxicity. The most common of these, at least as is known to medicine and horticulture, is *D. purpurea*, growing to 2 meters, Foxglove having a central stem with puffy, drooping, bell or slipper-shaped flowers. The large, hirsute leaves, growing up to 30 cm. in length, have an acrid, bitter, and offensive flavor. Outside of gardens, Foxglove populates woodland understories or open meadows. In various places I have lived in the California Pacific Coast Ranges, I have encountered sizeable thriving populations, often associated with the margins of second growth Redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*).

In folk medicine Foxglove is diuretic, sedative, antispasmodic, and cardiac. Nature has enriched the herb with more than 30 cardiac glycosides, principally digoxin, digitoxin digitoxigenin, and gitaloxigenin. The concentrations in *D. lanata* (Woolly Foxglove) are four times as potent as those in *D. purpurea*, and that plant is commonly the source of commercial pharmaceutical Digitalis extractives. The action of *Digitalis* occurs in the vagus nerve, the cranial nerve associated with heart activity. Topically, the leaves have been applied in poultices or compresses for the alleviation of headache and fever, or to lessen inflammation. Folk medicine has employed it to lessen vascular excitement in dropsical conditions, as as a topical for sores and bruises.

For top potency, leaves are collected when the herb begins to flower. After drying, it must be immediately enclosed in airtight containers to prevent reabsorption of water vapor from the air. By tradition of the Devonshire Romany, Foxglove seeds were to be gathered when the moon was waning. The plant demands utmost respect; ingesting minute amounts of any part of the herb can be an affront to the heart, altering cardiac function and rhythm. Poisoning symptoms include retching, erratic pulse, cramping, delirium, convulsions, and death from heart paralysis. Mere touching of the plant may provoke a rash, nausea, or a discomfort of the brain in some persons.

The Spirit-Retinue of Foxglove

Trepidation, Umbrage, Dread, Choler, Obloquy, Periodicity, Coordination, Ancestral Medicine, Tentative Aid, Quiet Vigor, Hidden Armaments, Seductive Veils, and Fatal Beauty.

As used in magic and ritual, the entire plant is valued, including its expressed juices. the leaves and blossoms; for medicine, the leaves. In astrological and planetary correspondence Foxglove is allied with Venus, Mercury, and Saturn. It is used for Protection, Færie Appeasement, Cursing, and Necromancy.

Like beans, the flowers of this herb—particularly its hollow, globular flowers—were believed in folklore to be inhabited by the souls of the dead. In Scotland it was considered unlucky to have a Foxglove in a house or on board a ship. In Virginia folk-magic, a traditional ointment is compounded from Foxglove and Rattlesnake oil to rid the effects of being blasted.

Welsh folk magic employed the plant's juices, rubbed into the floor of a house, for protection from faeries. In Ireland (county Leitrim) the plant is used both as a ward against færies, and any illness they might cause.

FRANKINCENSE

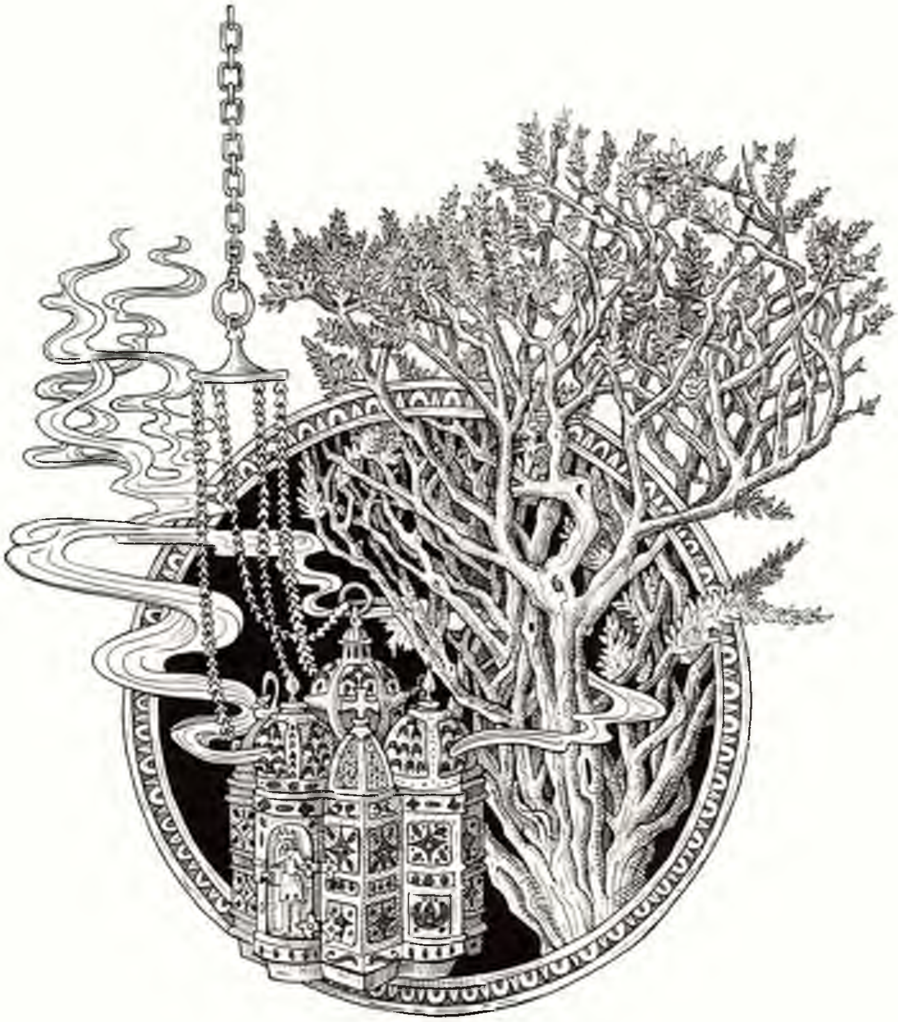
Boswellia carteri, Boswellia spp.
Burseraceæ (Torchwood Family)

FRANKINCENSE emerges from the Burseraceæ, a plant family revered since ancient times for its aromatic balsam-producing trees and shrubs. The name commonly refers to the fragrant resin collected from incised wounds on the trunks of trees from the genus *Boswellia*. Frankincense inhabits the deserts of Arabia, Oman, and Somalia; it is also present in Yemen, which possesses at least eight different species. In many places the resin, produced by 'tapping', or wounding the tree with traditional chisels, is simply known as *lubān*, and the tree as *shajarat al-lubān*. *Lubān* is the root of the word *Olibanum*, a former European name for resin from a number of Frankincense tree sources. Ancient pre-Islamic incense altars from South Arabia, inscribed with the Semitic names of diverse aromata, mention *lbny*, likely indicating Frankincense.

Commercial Frankincense may be any of a number of *Boswellia* species. B. *sacra* (Saudi Frankincense), and B. *carteri* (also called Gum Thus) are regarded by some as the moſt desirable, though this is a source of animated debate. The closely related B. *papyrifera*, native to Ethiopia, is the resin source for incense used in Coptic rites.

Despite its origin in Arabia (and its modern association with Chriſtianity), Frankincense entered ancient European use through polytheiſtic rite. It was said that the Roman emperor Nero burnt the equivalent of a year's Arabian production of the resin on the funerary rites of his consort Poppaea. If true, this amount would be in excess of 3,000 tons, the eſtimated annual weight exported to ancient Greece and Rome.

In addition to its perfumed smoke, Frankincense has also been employed as a medicine for nervous disroders, as a brain tonic, and in cosmetics. In Saudi Arabia, where it is known as *maghrayt d'sheehaz*, the species B. *sacra* is eſteemed an aphrodisiac, and the gum resin is both chewed and burned for this purpose. *Shihri*, a white variety, is chewed throughout Arabia for the betterment of oral hygiene; its medical properties are antiseptic, digeſtive carminative, emmenagogue, and nervine. In traditions of European monaſtic medicine, Frankincense was a valued topical, used to treat rashes, itching, and skin lesions. It also recurs as an ingredient for skin ointments, whiteners and other cosmetics, as evidenced by such important specialiſt medical texts as the *Trotula*. Frankincense has, among its many other magical and material properties, the ability to slow and deepen the breath, a ſtate



conducive to meditation, trance, prayer, and other ritual modalities.

When burned as a suffumigation, its aromatics are unique, combining well with woody and balsamic scents, as well as floral aromas with warming character. It shares particular affinity with Rose, both in odor and in spirit, and the two may harmonize in the manner of the Eucharist. The ancient art of *libanomanteia* derived prophecies from inhalation of incense, of which Frankincense frequently featured as an ingredient. It was a common constituent in suffumigant formulae in the Greek Magical Papyri.

Esoterically, Frankincense is aligned with the spiritual coterie of the Sun, and as an arboreal product is one of the greatest terrestrial emissaries of that power. Chief among its occult powers are Oblation, Illumination, Devotion, Memory, Reconciliation, Beneficence, and Fortification. It possesses a strong axis of Summoning, or compelling spirit, which can serve equally in the 'high' magic of theurgy and the 'low' magic of the love-charm. Both are allied from the energetic perspective of Allure, that power meant to conjure, bait, and manifest to presence the heart of the Beloved—be it mortal or divine.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF FRANKINCENSE

Sanctity, Rapture, Appeal, Safekeeping, Fortune, Zealotry, Religious Fervor, Saintly Vision, Divine Intercession, Ecstatic Contemplation, Architectonic Splendor, and Sanctified Flesh.

In testament to its magnetic and attractive qualities, *The Leyden Papyrus*, that ancient Egyptian magical manuscript, contains a recipe for an incense for "bringing the gods in by force", containing bile of crocodile and pounded Frankincense. Herodotus reports a Babylonian rite, pursued in isolation, using smoldering Frankincense to purify the body after sexual congress, both in men and women. A medieval recipe for magical ink combines the blood of a cow, the fresh blood of a white dove, Frankincense, Myrrh, black ink, Cinnabar, Mulberry juice, rainwater, and the juices of Wormwood and Vetch.

> Gathering frankincense requires the burning of storax because every single frankincense-producing tree is guarded by large numbers of tiny, dappled, winged snakes (these are the snakes which invade Egypt) and only the smoke of burning storax resin drives them away from the trees.
>
> HERODOTUS
> *The Histories*

Boswellia sacra is used used in Yemen to repel Djinn and the Evil Eye, and in Romania, Frankincense is sewn into the hems of pregnant womens' skirts as a protection for mother and child against evil spirits. As an incense, it has enjoyed a long history in Yemen of being burned to protect a woman during childbirth, and to rid a new home of animal vermin such as wolf spiders, scorpions, and snakes.

FUMITORY

Fumaria officinalis
Papaveraceæ (Poppy Family)

HAUNTING fallow ground and disturbed byways, Fumitory is an herb native to Eurasia and North Africa, growing to 0.5 meters in height with short, tube-shaped pink blossoms with purple tips. Its name arose due to perceptions of the plant's physical mimesis of smoke; portions of the plant, including leaves and flowers, have been thought by some to evoke the ephemeral appearance of vapors, while others remarked on its odor, said to resemble burning fumes. The essence of the herb was therefore ascribed to the subterranean efflux, originating deep within the earth. Aerial portions, particularly the leaves, are the part most often used in magic and medicine.

In folk healing, it is hepatic, digestive, stimulant, laxative, and mildly diuretic. In herbal formulae is frequently used for conditions of 'toxic blood', as well as external use for skin inflammations. An infusion of the leaves and flowers has been used to remedy excess biliousness and related conditions of the liver.

Fumitory's principal planetary influences are Jupiter and Saturn, and its magical uses are Exorcism, Blessing, and Protection from Maleficia. The herb was praised by ancient Arab herbalists for thickening the blood and invigorating the body in general, and it was burned as an exorcising agent in the Middle Ages. Though little used now, the dried herb is an excellent carbonaceous supplement for incense, and the living plant a fine companion in the medicine garden.

The Spirit-Retinue of Fumitory

Calibration, Synthesis, Mediation, Sequestration, Annulment, Withdrawal, Fluctuation, Ephemerality, Delicacy, Shadow, Vulenary Tinctures, Fixed Amalgams, and Tenebrous Counterpoisons.

⁂

GALANG

Kaempferia galangal

Zinziberaceæ (Ginger Family)

MARABA, or the Resurrection Lily as Galang is known, is a tropical plant distributed in India, Southeast Asia, and Indonesia. It is noted for its cylindrical, fleshy, bunched rhizome which is strongly aromatic. The plant has thick, rounded leaves to 10–15 cm in length, and a large white flower with an spot of purple within. Its aromatic profile is warm, sweet, spicy, pepper, pungent, floral, woody and medicinal. Related species include Peacock Ginger (*K. rotunda*). It is sometimes called Lesser Galangal, although that designation properly belongs to *Alpinia officinarum*.

The rhizome is the portion most often employed. As a medicine it is stomachic, febrifuge, expectorant, stypic, and insecticide, and has been used as an oral anæsthetic. Used topically, Galang has been used to treat rheumatism, and the plant is under scientific evaluation for anti-tumor properties. Long used as a spice in Indonesian cuisine, psychoactive properties have been reported from the leaf, and the use of *Kaempferia galanga* in arrow-poisons in Malaysia has been documented.

The essential oil contains high concentrations of ethyl trans-p-methoxycinnamate ($C_{12}H_{14}O_3$) and ethyl cinnamate ($C_{11}H_{12}O_2$), whose aromatic fraction lends a woody, balsamic scent. Among other constituents, it also contains borneol ($C_{10}H_{18}O$) which is also found naturally in Castoreum.

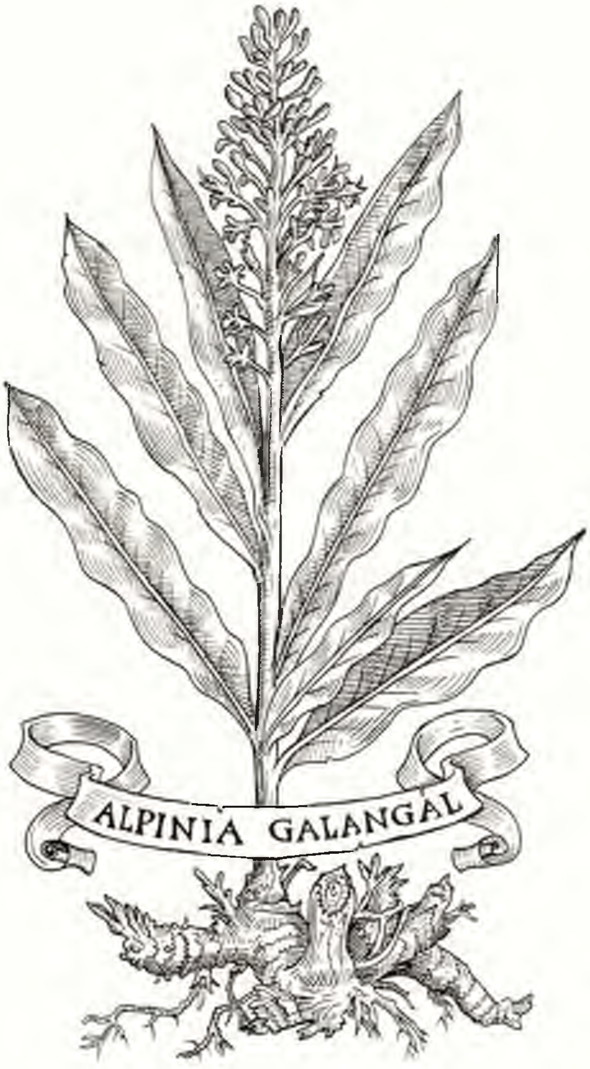
In planetary correspondence, it is firstly associated with the Sun, and secondarily with Mars; its corresponding element is Fire. Its magical properties are Triumph, Charisma, Allure, Coersion and Protection. If using the fresh or dried root, its aromatic principles are readily extracted into high-proof alcohol, for perfumes and sachets. The dried rhizome may also be carried as a charm in warfare and confrontation, or to prevail in legal matters.

GALANGAL, LESSER

Alpinia officinarum

Zinziberaceæ (Ginger Family)

GALANGAL is a moisture-loving tropical plant much cultivated as a spice, with upright lanceolate leaves, growing to 1.5 meters in height. Its flowers are white to pink, and the brown aromatic rhizome is spicy and sweet, its flavor reminiscent of Ginger and Pepper. In African American magic,



it has sometimes been sold under the names Low John the Conqueror and Chewing John. The root, leaves, flowers and seeds are all used in magic and medicine, and the essential oil, gathered by steam distillation, is also available.

Galangal and Ginger are thought to have entered European cuisine during the late medieval period, though its use has much declined. It is still valued in Asia as a culinary spice, and has been used for curries, liqueurs and perfumes. In *The Histories*, Herodotus relays a Scythian burial custom wherein a wax-covered corpse, having had the entrails removed, was filled with Frankincense, Seeds of Smallage and Anise, and Galangal root.

Medicinally, it is antiseptic, carminative, expectorant, and anti-inflammatory. In Martinique, it is known as *atuomo* and it is prepared in decoction as a remedy for flu and and flatulence. In traditional Libyan medicine, where it is known as *cúlgan* or *cúlgian*, a preparation of the rhizome is highly esteemed as treatment of sexual impotence.

Its magical functions are diverse and include protection against noxious spirits, compelling, success, protection from disease, fortification and oblation. In its warming, initiating aspects, it bears the powers of Mars; in its aspect of fortification and unification it resonates a Jovian power. Both may be expressed separately, or in tandem, depending on the focus of the operation.

Washing ones' hands in a Galangal root decoction is a potent charm for success in gambling, as North American root-doctors well know. One famous Hoodoo spell for success in legal proceedings success requires a Galangal Root be chewed, then spit while in court; a money-drawing mojo employs slices of Galangal Root, along with silver coins, in a leather bag.

In Brazilian Candomble, leaves from species of Galangal known as Leopoldina (*Alpinia zerumbet*) are used as a perfumed, healing bath and is allied with the orixa Oxum. In South Asia, leaves of the related species A. *nigra* are burned to ward off evil spirits.

Some examples of the *Alraun*, the vivified root-fetish traditions of Europe normally associated with Mandrake, have used carved rhizomes of Lesser Galangal. One such exemplar, used in combination with a dried frog, was found beneath a gallows-pole, and used magically to cure epileptic women.

The Spirit-Retinue of Lesser Galangal

Vitalization, Exhilaration, Immaculation, Advancement, Winnings, Vindication, Impedimentation, Sweet Refreshment, Robust Warmth, Creative Acuity, Strict Demarcation, Garlanded Peripheries, and Good Riddance.

GALBANUM

Ferula gummosa
Apiaceæ (Dill Family)

PROPERLY, Galbanum refers to a fragrant gum resin originating in several species of *Ferula* inhabiting the Persian tablelands, and, in some cases, other genera of the Dill Family. Its name is derived from the old Hebrew *khelbenah*, by which designation it was known as an ingredient of sacred temple incense. Owing to the differing perspectives of various ancient reports, as well as morphological similarities of aromatic *Ferula* species, the name 'Galbanum' is inconsistently aligned with a single plant.

In the modern era, most gum and essential oil appearing in western commerce is derived from *Ferula gummosa*, which is synonymous with F. *galbaniflua*. The plant is an umbelliferous herb growing to 2 meters tall, with bright green or glaucous stalks, yellow flowers, and exuding a milky sap. The gum-resin is naturally exuded in tears, but for commericial production of Galbanum, the plant must be wounded. The gum exhibits a strong rustic character, but the essential oil extracted therefrom has a fine balsamic scent, with a crisp phenolic dimension of green, resinous leaves. The scent is enigmatic and unique, and its aromatic character is variable, subject to indvidual discernment. Oil resulting from steam distillation of the resin can be clear or a pale yellow. This product varies considerably in quality, based on its botanical source material, method of extraction, and the character of the merchant supplying it. Another source of 'Gum Galbanum' was a separate plant, *Ferula rubricaulis*.

As a therapeutic, it is is warm and expulsive; it possesses the qualities of a stimulant, antispasmodic and expectorant. Galbanum was highly regarded as a medicinal plant in the lands where it grew, chiefly as a uterine stimulant, but also for wound care, being useful at drawing out infectious matter. The ancient Greeks compounded it with Myrrh as a topical for arresting hair loss, and it was a recurring ingredient in preparations of the *Mithridatum* and kindred antidote formulæ. Most Galbanum in modern times is exported for use in perfumery.

> Serpents are driven away by the fumes of burnt Galbanum, and they will equally avoid persons whose body has been rubbed with it. It is curative also of the sting of the scorpion.
>
> PLINY
> *Natural History*, XXIV

The plant is governed by the Sun, an association affirmed by its appearance, color, heat, and chosen dwellings. Its Solar aspects are also magnified through its use as a medicinal. The herb's gum-extraction and essential oil, by contrast, are governed by the Moon and Venus, attributions which are radiated through its magical use. Not without strong rationales, some account the resin as an emanation of Uranus.

As with many plants of the Dill Family, the resin expresses Venusian characteristics when affecting the body, whether through aroma or when taken internally. Despite its clean and purifying character, the oil also expresses sensual dimensions. Dioscorides wrote of the sweet-scented Egyptian unguent *metopion*, made from Galbanum, seed of Frankincense, Terebinth resin, Cardamom, Sweet Rush, Sweet Flag, Honey, Wine, and Myrrh, compounded with oil from bitter almonds and unripe olives. The Greeks knew of its use as an abortifacient, in combination with Juniper and Spikenard. Root of the related plant Zallouh (*Ferula hermonis*) is valued as an aphrodisiac in Syria and Lebanon. Magically, it is used for, and spirit summoning and intercourse, powers especially magnified by the Moon.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF GALBANUM

Munificence, Enigma, Diffusion, Dilation, Sublimity, Fulfilment, Celestial Counsel, Fruited Barrens, Forlorn Savour, Thwarted Attack, Swift Recovery, Raptuous Communion and Transcendent Sensualism.

In tessellation with its good nature as a counterpoison, Galbanum is also used for protection from evil; in the Middle East, the fruiting stalks are still hung in the house as a talisman against noxious spirits, particularly for protecting women about to give birth (in ancient times it was also prescribed for expelling the afterbirth and the stillborn). Nicander reported a formula for a strong suffumigation against poisonous snakes made from a combusted mixture of Galbanum, pulverized wood of Cedar, lignite, stag and roe horns, Fern, root of Frankincense, Garden Cress, Black Cumin, sulfur, bitumen, and Nettle.

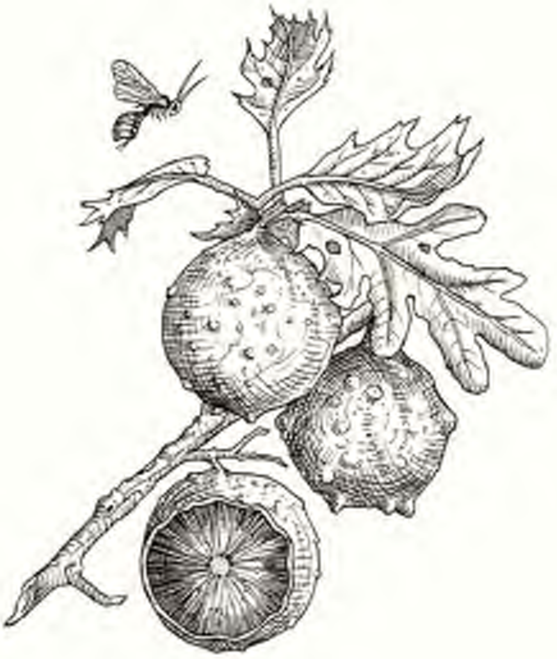
In occult application, in consideration of its alignment with elemental Air, its best usage is first as an aromatic, the resin serving to empower incense intended for meditation or conjuration of the angelic-celestial retinue, or ritual operations of an expansive, projective nature. The essential oil is likewise added to anointing oils used for similar theurgic purposes. Reflecting upon its aligment with elemental Earth, Galbanum may enhance any aromatic sacrament prepared for practices aligned with the rustic Host of the Carnal—the Satyri, Sileni, and Nymphai.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Peace, Balance, Exorcism, Divination.
Element: Air and Earth.
Planet: The Sun, Moon and Venus.
Deific Forms: *Angeloi*.
Divine Appellation: Mother Resin.
Virtue: Sweetness concealed in Bitterness.
Body Part: Womb.
Corporeal Action: Conduction.
Therapeutic: Corporeality.
Affliction: Detachment.
Emblem: A priest and a sacrificial animal stand before a mountaintop altar, with perfumed smoke ascending.

GALLS

A GROTESQUE, swollen protruberance emerging from the bark of certain trees announces the presence of the Gall. Sometimes containing insect larvae, these arboreal neoplasms arise from various pathological causes, such as wasps. In essence a kind of tumor, on Oaks they are known as Oak Apples or gallnuts. Tannin-rich galls also appear on *Rhus chinensis* and are the



phyto-immune reaction against the punctures of certain aphid species. A rich source of tannic acid, ranging from 50–70%, galls also contain small amounts of gallic and ellagic acids.

Historically, Galls have been used for tanning, dyeing, and making ink. Medicinal use of galls was known to the ancient Greeks since 450 BCE. Tanning traditions in Europe, before the Industrial Revolution, relied on tannin derived from Oaks and their galls, as this is one of the richest naturally occurring sources. Those gallnuts harvested from the Aleppo Oak (*Quercus infectoria*) are favored for composition of the ancient standard formula of Iron Gall Ink, and are also used to make Turkish Nutgall, a particular concentration of the tumor's virtue, is an extraction from the twigs of the same tree.

In the Mediteraneann, galls form on certain Sage species such as *Salvia fruticosa*, owing to the activity of certain cynipd gall wasps. These swellings are beloved as a delectable foodstuff, and are either eaten raw, or made into conserves. Other plant galls are caused by tiny arachnids in the genus *Eriophyes*, appearing in diverse, colorful and whimsical forms on a variety of plant hosts.

* * *

GARDENIA

Gardenia spp.

Rubiaceæ (Madder Family)

ESTEEMED for their intensely fragrant, thickly-petaled flowers, the genus *Gardenia* contains more than 130 accepted species native to tropical Asia, Africa, and the Pacific Islands. The Gardenias best-known to the temperate gardener are diminutive, glossy-leaved shrubs such as G. *augusta*, but many are trees attaining respectable heights, such as the Dikmali (G. *resinifera*), native to India, where it provides timber for specialist woodworking. Their striking flowers are often white, but sometimes pale yellow.

Generally, it is the blossom whch is used, for its ethereal and intoxicating scent. Its fragrance is redolent of Jasmine, though gently balsamic and possessing unique, yet elusive floral notes of its own, becoming more pronounced as temperature and humidity rise. Essential oil is extracted commercially through various processes including steam distillation and enfleurage, though product quality and plant sources can and do vary.

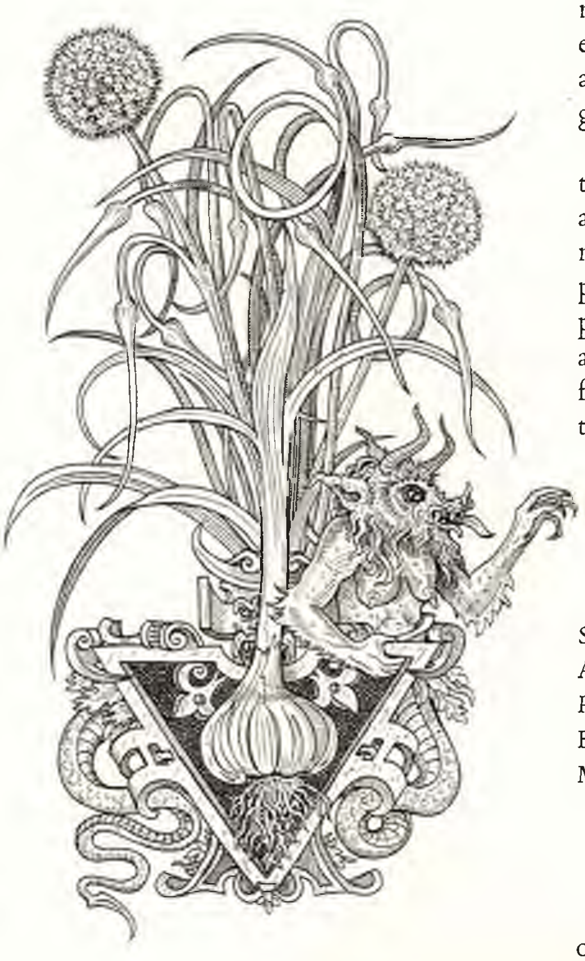
In the Society Islands of Polynesia, an infusion of the flowers of powerfully aromatic Tahitian Gardenia (G. *taitensis*) is a traditional remedy for migraine. There the plant is known as Tiare, and an exquisite tea, made from the plant's dried flowers, combined with Black Tea (*Camellia sinensis*) is made.

Various Gardenia species are the subject of current pharmacological research for their potentials as cancer inhibitors and antivirals. In folk medicine, they have been employed to treat jaundice, as well as expel worms. In India, the root of Dikmali (G. *turgida*) has been used to treat conditions of seminal derangements.

Gardenia manifests the magical principles of beneficience, healing, and protection. It also commands great potency as a love-charm, particularly those in which the user also desires personal protection from the same plant source. In planetary correspondence, Gardenia is aligned first with the Moon, and second with Venus; its allied elemental power is Water.

Infusion of the bark of the Tiare was used in Tongan magical medicine to rid the patient of hallucinations caused by the spirit of a deceased family member. In East Africa, leaves of a native Gardenia species known as Muchimwemwe (*G. volkensii*) are used for protective magic; the root-bark of the same plant is used for making fertility charms.

The *curanderos* and *curanderas* of Peru use a flower-infusion of the Gardenia known as Jasmín (*G. augusta*), together with Rose petals and Forida Water, as a body wash for improvement of matters of health, love and money.



GARLIC

Allium sativum spp.
Amaryllidaceæ (Lily Family)

AN herbaceous perennial native to central Asia growing to a meter in height, with odorous, esculent bulbs, and an umbel inflorescence, in appearance usually white, pink, or pale purple in color. Cultivated Garlic varieties are completely sterile and must reproduce asexually; seed must be produced by human intervention and is exceedingly rare. Conversely, *Allium sativum* does occur in its wild state in southern Europe. Garlic belongs to the genus *Allium*, or True Onions, though its character is normally regarded as being wholly distinct from them. Most cultures which have adopted Garlic as food or medicine also have attendant corpora of magic associated with it. In Mediterranean countries, another species known as Victor's Garlic (*Allium victoralis*) is also credited with great magical power.

Its virtues in magical operations are many, the best being its capability to expel rotten and malicious entities. Its formal powers, besides exorcism, are protection from maleficia, warfare and potentiation. Among the heavenly rulers, it is given to Mars, and sometimes to Mercury.

In curing, Garlic has been deployed as an antiasthmatic, antibiotic, expectorant, diaphoretic, and anti-rheumatic. It is strongly associated with magical medicine, or curing using both therapeutic drugs in combination with ritual. The pungent bulb was, for example, employed by ancient Greek midwives as an herb of protection for the mother and child; formulae for delivery of the afterbirth also prescribed a Garlic-decoction bath for the mother. Dioscorides prescribed Garlic for a variety of complaints, including leprosy. In ancient times the herb was thought to provide strong protection from poisons.

> Sixe things, that here in order shall ensue,
> Against all poysons have a secret power,
> *Peare, Garlicke, Reddish-root, Nuts, Rape,* and *Rue,*
> But *Garlicke* Chiefe; for they that it devoure,
> May drink & care not how their drink do brew.
>
> SIR JOHN HARINGTON
> *The Englishman's Doctour*, 1607

In ancient religion, its odor was thought to offend the gods, being considered a concentrator of malodorous power. Greeks of the ancient world were prohibited from entering temples of the gods if their breath stank of Garlic. Cultures ancient and modern also observe taboos on the use of Garlic and Onions, on varying religious grounds. Priests of Aphrodite of Libya did not eat of it. However, certain wrathful and infernal deities were thought to favor it: Garlic wreaths were offered up to Hekate, patroness of sorcery, on small cairn-altars at crossroads.

The emanations of the plant so appalling to the gods was also offensive to evil spirits, and was a known frustrator of malefic magical operations. Greek soldiers carried the bulb as a charm against sorcery and ill-fortune, and sailors brought braids of Garlic on board their vessels as a charm for protection from shipwreck. In modern times, the Romanian cathartic dancers known as the Călusari employ magic bags of Garlic and Mugwort as protection against disease-causing faeries. In Ukrainian folk magic, Garlic was carried by young women when travelling to protect them from evil, and in Estonia it was used as a talisman to protect infants from demons and witchcraft, and in Greece, the chaotic earth-demons known as the *kallikantzaroi* are bound with Garlic if an infant is born on or near Christmas day.

Its best surviving magical quality in western popular culture is its usage against vampiric spirits, and the undead. Though repeated in the most unimaginative of ways, this strand of Garlic lore has diverse applications, and has survived in various cultures from ancient times up until the present day. An old Anglo-Saxon charm employed Garlic heads, worn on the person, to stave off the walking dead on All Hallows Eve. English concoctions for driving demons out of a possessed person contained Garlic, Holy Water and Church Lichen. In the Balkans, infants are rubbed with garlic to prevent their nocturnal consumption by witches.

The Spirit-Retinue of Garlic

Preservation, Obviation, Musculature, Haleness,
Rusticity, Lewdness, Alarm, Outrage, Stench,
Bellicose Threat, Offensive Outgassings,
Subterranean Fire, & Infernal
Governance.

Its flame-bearing aspect lends its strength to all magical operations of wrath, hate and destruction. Romans regarded the Stinking Bulb as sacred to Mars; as such it was consumed to lend great courage in battles; legions grew it in all territory they conquered. In the sorcery of Palo Mayombe, the *Ndoki* is a powerful servitor-spirit employed specifically for murder and torment. A black cat, after being tortured, is boiled and buried, then exhumed. A few bones of the animal are then added to the finger-bones from seven human corpses and the Graveyard Dust from seven graves. The herbal ingredients added are Garlic and Pepper. In Tibet, Garlic and Onions are regarded as protectors against noxious spirits and may be offered as oblations to wrathful deities.

Its more specific uses against foul magic extend to protecting the carrier from fascination, or the Evil Eye. Garlic was used as a specific against fascination in the Middle Ages; in modern Romany magic, Garlic is still held in high esteem as a preventative against Evil Eye, the plant is also rubbed on horses' expel noxious influences. Among Albanians, necklaces of Garlic are traditionally used as protective amulets for this purpose, both for humans, and tied to cow horns. It was also ritually smoldered on the fire; the powerful odor which subsequently arose was a repellent for werewolves. Necklaces of Garlic bulbs have also had long amuletic use in Tuscany as protection against the *malocchio*, as they are in Spain for *Mal de Ojo*. An old Greek charm for protecting fruit-bearing trees hung Garlic from their branches, and a single clove of the odorous plant was worn on an infant's bonnet as protection from the Evil Eye.

A curious 18th century Hungarian spell utilizing Garlic for second sight was documented by historian Éva Pócs in Tolna. On the day prior to St. George's Day, a snake was decapitated using a St. Elena's coin. Garlic was used to stuff its head, which was then affixed to the rim of a hat, and worn the next day to church. If any witches attended the service, the grim talisman would enable its user to see them as they exited, blushing.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Exorcism, Warfare, Protection from Maleficia.
Element: Fire.
Planet: Mars.
Deific Forms: Hekate.
Virtue: Expulsion.
Body Part: Spoor.
Medicine: Antibacterial, antiputrefaction.
Chemical Virtue: Allicin—$C_6H_{10}S_2O$.
Chemical Element: Sulfur.
Therapeutic: Disruption.
Affliction: Stagnation.
Emblem: An upraised arm wearing a *cestus*, holding a blazing firebrand.

GENTIAN

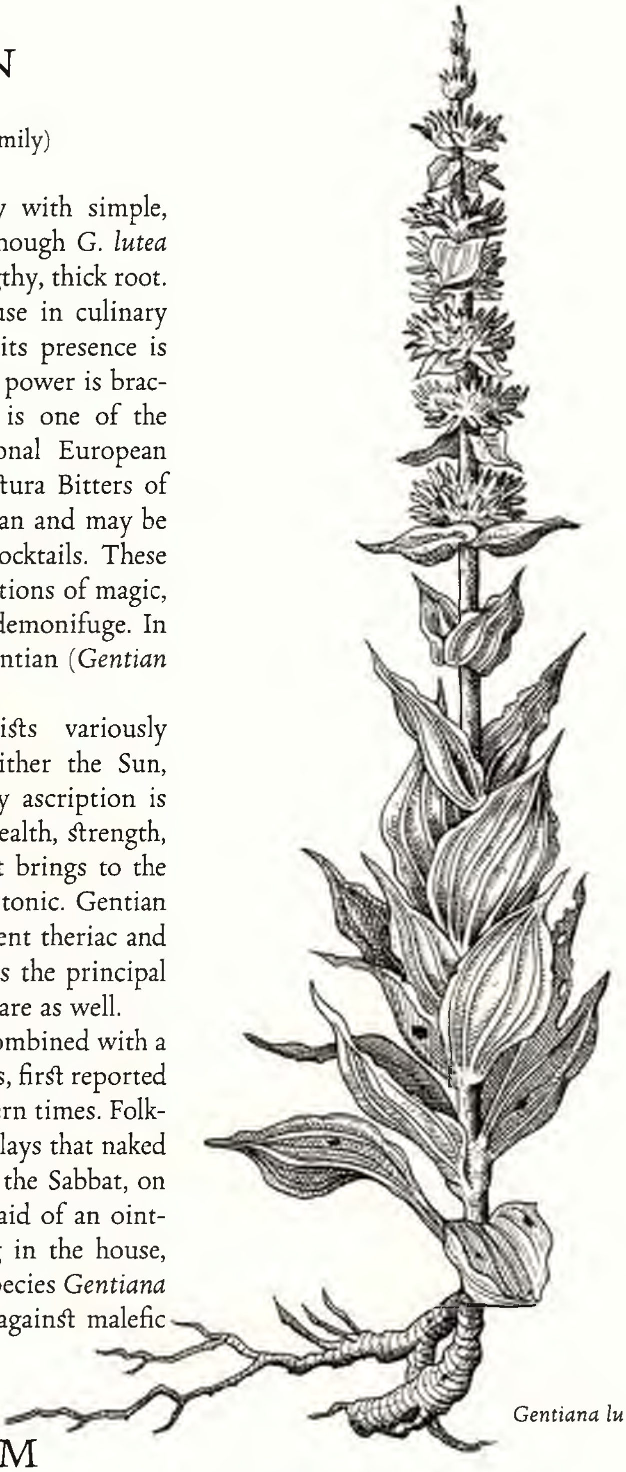
Gentiana spp.

Gentianaceæ (Gentian Family)

A HANDSOME herb, usually with simple, opposite leaves, blue flowers (although G. *lutea* bears yellow blossoms), and a lengthy, thick root. It is known principally for its use in culinary and medicinal bitters, in which its presence is considered essential. Its aromatic power is bracing, bittering, and warming; it is one of the principal ingredients in traditional European Bitters formulations. The Angostura Bitters of commerce contains mostly Gentian and may be used medicinally as well as in cocktails. These aspects extend to its use in operations of magic, where it is frequently used as a demonifuge. In Polish folk medicine, the Star Gentian (*Gentian cruciata*) was used to treat rabies.

Historically, esoteric botanists variously ascribe the plant's powers to either the Sun, Mars and Jupiter. Each planetary ascription is justified through the virtues of health, strength, and homeostasis, which the plant brings to the human constitution as a general tonic. Gentian was a frequent ingredient in ancient theriac and counterpoison recipes; the root is the principal portion used, though the flowers are as well.

In folk sorcery, Gentian was combined with a toad bone for pacifying authorities, first reported by Pliny and persisting into modern times. Folklore of Belarus and the Ukraine relays that naked witches flew up chimneys and to the Sabbat, on broomsticks or pokers, with the aid of an ointment made from Gentian. Hung in the house, the root of the North American species *Gentiana andrewii* was used as a talisman against malefic spirits and magic.



Gentiana lutea

GERANIUM

Geranium spp., *Pelargonium* spp.

Geraniaceæ (Geranium Family)

GERANIUMS are perennial shrubs, many of which are fragrant or valued horticultural species due to their ease of care and attractive forms. The leaves may be round, scallop- shaped, or dissected, and the five-petalled flowers are pink, red, white, lavender, purple, and occasionally blue. The fruit is a schizocarp much resembling an enlongated bird's beak, hence the common name *Cranesbill.* The fragrant leaves are the parts most used, as well as the essential oil distilled therefrom.

Many Pelargoniums are native South Africa, particularly to the Fynbos, the unique arid plant habitats of the Cape region, whose vegetation is characterized by hardiness, fragrance and wild beauty. Many plants referred to commonly as

Geraniums are genus *Pelargonium*, which have also been subsumed into this entry. Many species and horticultural varieties are commercially available, each with unique aromatic profiles including Rose, Mint, and Citrus. Others are redolent of Cherries, Apple, Nutmeg and even Chocolate. The 'plain' Geranium scent common to many varieties, released when stems are broken or leaves are crushed, may be described as 'green' and 'peppery', with a disturbing undercurrent that is difficult to describe, but which some persons experience as mildly metallic or medicinal.

Its medicinal effect upon the body is astringent and stypic, and this is particularly true for the species rich in essential oils. In folk medicine, Geranium has been used to treat sore throat, and some types have been employed as a specific for venereal diseases. Umckaloaba (*Pelargonium sidioides*), a species with small, attractive glaucous leaves and a diminutive maroon flower, it valued for its roots, which have been used for immune stimulation.

Geranium and the related Pelargonium are dually aligned with Venus and Mars. Their powers in magic are Balance, Exorcism, and Hex-Breaking. A Hoodoo bath for luck and success is made from sea salt and oil of Geranium. After bathing, the bathwater is thrown toward the sun at sunrise to complete the enchantment. As an adjunct to war magic, Geranium is also an effective ally for all forms of combat.

In ancient Europe, the blue-flowered Woodland Cranesbill (*Geranium sylvaticum*) had protective associations; in Northern Europe it was used as a blue dye for robes and war mantles, and known as 'Odin's Favour' or Gottesgnad, 'God's Grace'. The color extracted from the plant possessed the power to protect warriors in battle.

Baptism of St. Cyprianus.

¶ My preferred scented variety is the Skeleton Rose Geranium (*Pelargonium radens*), exuding a Rose-lemon scent. Its aromatics readily extract into high-proof alcohol, and, combined with leaves of fragrant tobacco, are used to make a cleansing wash for external use.

Skeleton Rose Geranium, fresh leaf	6 parts
Patchouli, dry leaf	2 parts
Mandrake, dry root	1 part
Tobacco, fresh leaf	1 part

Cover all in a mixture of half isopropyl alcohol and half ethyl alcohol 60% ABV. Let steep in a sealed vessel, in a dark place, for three months, shaking occasionally. Strain and bottle. Use to perfume body, clothes, altar, or dwelling-place.

GERMANDER

Teucrium spp.

Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

COMPRISED of hardy perennial subshrubs and annuals to one meter in height. Conforming to the classic phenotype of the woody lamiaceæ, its leaves are opposite, in shape ovate or lanceaolate, with blue, white, lilac, purple or magenta flowers. Sometimes woody, the genus *Teucrium* contains species often used as ornamentals in gardens, with many gardeners unaware of the plants' ancient medicinal reputation.

Germander was valued by the ancients for its action against poison, and features as a component of many formulations of antidote and theriac. In Egypt, some archaeological evidence in the form of residues in ancient wine amphorae, have revealed Germander's use as an herbal adjunct in ancient wines, possibly as a preservative, though the plant does possess subtle aromatics. In Moroccan herb-gathering customs, Germander sought for medicine is traditionally gathered before sunrise.

T. scorodonia is ensconced in Welsh and English folk medicine, where it is used for coughs, rheumatism, sprains, and topical afflictions, as well as the reduction of edema. The species *T. montanum*, is similarly used in the folk medicine of the Balkans. Similar uses for *Teucrium polium* are found in the folk medicine of Libya and Saudi Arabia, where it is known as *Jaad*. In Southern Africa decoctions and leaf poultices of *T. trifidium* are used as a topical medicine to treat bee stings and snakebite. Cat Thyme (*T. marum*) exhibits an intoxicating effect on cats similar to Catnip.

SPECIES	COMMON NAME
Teucrium canadense	Canadian Germander
Teucrium chamædrys	Ground Oak
Teucrium scorodonia	Wood Sage
Teucrium polium	Mountain Germander
Teucrium marum	Cat Thyme
Teucrium divaricatum	Astride Germander

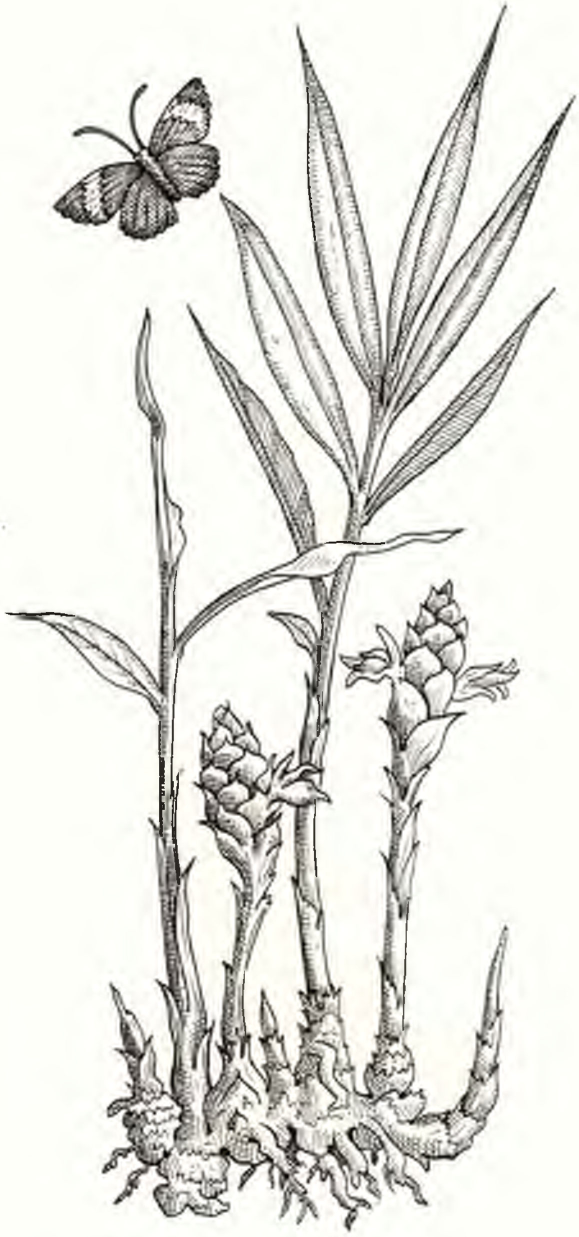
Ancient doctors prescribed Germander infused in vinegar for spleen complaints; and mixed in wine for jaundice. The herb has also paradoxically been used as both a stomachic and purgative. Traditional herbal medicine also uses Germander as a supportive in the treatment of diabetes. Its active chemical principles include gallic acid, syrapoline, thujene, caryophyllene, cedrol, epi-cadinol, and bisabolene.

Germander is aligned with the planetary intelligence and virtues of Mercury, similar in many respects to Lavender, though of drier and less balsamic character. In magic, it is used for Purification, Protection from Poison, Protection for Children, and Charisma, and as a garden-dweller, it may also serve as a House Ward. A strong decoction of the leaves, flowers and twigs may be used as a cleansing body-wash, poured over the skin and left to air dry.

GINGER

Zingiber officinale

Zingiberaceæ (Ginger Family)



GINGER is a tropical plant growing to 1 meter in height, with long, leaf-shaped blades, yellow flowers, and a creeping rhizome which is the source of the fiery spice. Its flowers are aromatic, and the bruised stems are slightly fragrant. The peculiar flavor of the rhizome, which is as once pungent, spicy, and balsamic, give it versatility in cooking, and it can as a result flavor both sweet and savory dishes. It is a cultigen, having been farmed so long that it is no longer found in a wild state; in the Americas, Ginger production commenced in the Caribbean in the 1640s. Gingers are important nectar sources for many butterflies.

Other plants commonly called 'Gingers' may include species from the genus *Curcuma* or even *Alpinia*, though the True Gingers comprise *Zingiber*, which has 140 accepted species. The revered sister-species Awapuhi (*Z. zerumbet*), whose flower heads engorge with a slippery aromatic juice, is important to Hawaiian medicine and cosmetics, and is also known as Shampoo Ginger.

In medicinal usage the plant is aromatic, antispasmodic, anti-inflammatory, antiemetic, carminative, peripheral circulatory stimulant, and is often given in dyspepsia, flatulence, and imperfect digestion. Ginger is an excellent addition to perpared aromatic bitters; in French apothecary, it formed the superior substance of the *masticatoirs*, traditional electuaries chewed for the expulsion of phlegm. Modern Ginger beers, increasingly focused on the strength of the rhizome, may be drunk both for pleasure and for medicine. Its essential oil may be added to scented massage oils to increase circulation. When using it as an ingredient in perfumes and aromatic oils, it blends well with woody scents, such as Cedar; balsams such as Frankincense, and spicy woods such as Cassia.

In the European doctrine of planetary correspondences, Ginger is ruled by the Sun, favoring heat, yet also storing and producing it. As used in magic and ritual, it is most frequently found in operations of Healing, Love, Allure, Success, Spirit Summoning, Exorcism, Unbewitching, Memory, and Death.

The Spirit-Retinue of Ginger

Incitation, Flirtation, Lewdness, Flushing, Rubefaction, Alertness, Balance, Renewal, Tactility, Catalysis, Wandering Eyes, Odorous Arousal, and Wanton Caresses.

GOOSEBERRY

Ribes uva-crispa

Grossulariaceæ (Currant Family)

A SPINY shrub growing to 1.5 meters, the Gooseberry produces attractive pink and yellow 5-lobed flowers. Its fleshy, translucent berries are prized in cultivation and usually a pale green, but the fruit of some cultivars is pink, purple, or white. The leaves contain the toxic compound Prussic Acid (hydrogen cyanide, HCN), a poison also found in certain trees of the Rosaceae such as Almond. Long in cultivation, it is native to Europe, but its status as a native or introduced plant in Britain is in dispute.

North America harbors several endemic Gooseberry species. *Ribes hirtellum* is especially prized as edible, contributing some of its germplasm to hybrid breeding stock. The Orange Gooseberry (*R. pinetorum*) was used both as a food and as a ceremonial emetic in Native American ethnobotany.

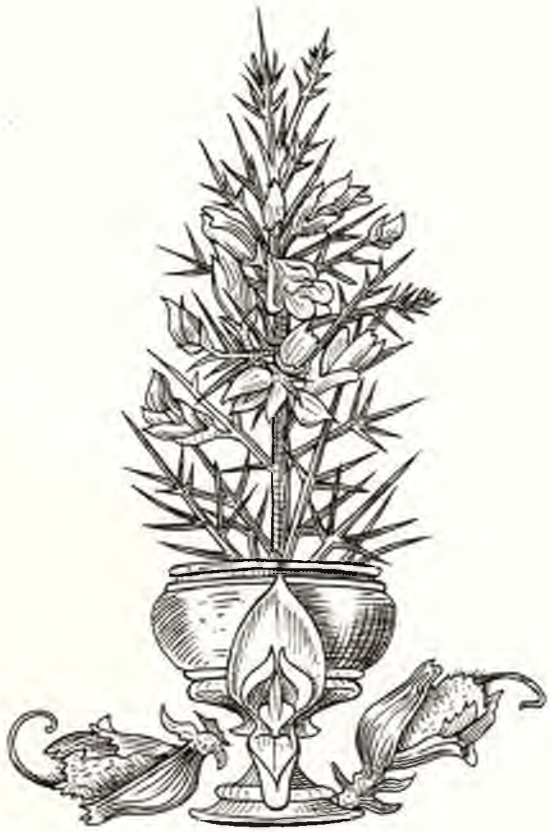
An Irish charm to cure sore eyes makes use of a twig with nine Gooseberry thorns upon it. Each thorn must point in the opposite direction to the one preceding it. The twig is held to the eye and each of the nine thorns pointed thereat. For each thorn, an Our Father, Hail Mary, and Gloria is uttered. This practice is undertaken for nine days.

GORSE

Ulex spp.

Fabaceæ (Pea Family)

THORNY and yellow-blossomed, Gorse or *Furze* forms dense thickets with dark green or glaucous foliage and is a common sight on heaths. The seed pods are small and downy, dehiscing to reveal small black to brown seeds. The flower yields up a golden colour of mild dyeing strength, and the wood and stems have renown as a hot-burning fuel, used in bakers' ovens. A number of species may be found in the British Isles, principally *U. europaeus*, but also Western Gorse (*U. gallii*) and Dwarf Gorse (*U. minor*). Hedges are often a mixture of several Gorse species. Medicinally it has been used to fortify the blood, as well as cleanse parasites in livestock.



Despite its hostile morphology, Gorse or Whin-Bush is a gregarious and cheery plant, which may readily be understood during a silent walk amongst its thickets, especially when in flower, the rich scent of the blossoms overwhelming to the senses. A fine cordial may be made by placing freshly gathered Gorse flowers in good brandy—as many as the bottle can accommodate with the spirit fully covering the plant material—and allowing them to steep for two weeks before decanting and drinking.

Magically, it is allied with the Brooms, being protective and naturally given to enforcing boundaries, though greater in cleansing power and natural fortification. Gorse wood, possessing a curious greasy character, is nevertheless hard and a worthy substance for carving. The thorny stems and flowers are readily dried and retain their color. Its planetary virtues are firmly aligned with Mars, and its classical Elemental correspondence is Fire.

In Devonshire, Gorse has been used in matchmaking and fertility dances, whilst on the Isle of Man, the shrubs were burnt as a powerful suffumigant of banishing to drive away malefic sorcerers. Conversely, old English lore relates that witches lurked beneath the plant's spiny branches.

The Spirit-Retinue of Gorse

Providence, Stringency, Contumacy, Inflammability,
Delineation, Metes & Bounds, Ensconced
Treasure, Austere Nobility, Cloaked
Effulgence, Natural Rigor,
Bristling Munitions,
Archaic Stirrings,
and Hoary
Scriptures.

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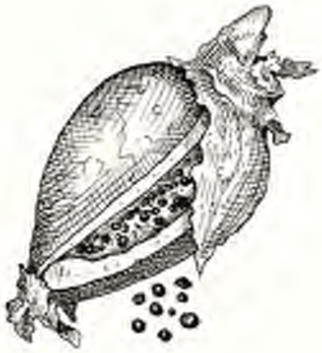


GRAINS OF PARADISE

Aframomum melegueta
Zingiberaceæ (Ginger Family)

ATARÉ, as it is also known, is a tropical spice plant from West Africa and also grown in the Caribbean. Preferring boggy, saturated soils and having a short stem with lanceolate leaves, it grows to 1.5 meters in height. The flowers, bearing slight resemblance to those of Calla Lily, can range in color from pink to light purple, give rise to a distinctive, furrowed brown pod containing abundant seeds. The rhizome can attain considerable lengths and propagates itself asexually, forming matted colonies. The genus *Aframomum* has 55 different species, some of which are also valued spices, such as Korarima, or Ethiopian Cardamom (*A. corrorima*).

The portion most used is the seed, whose flavor is warming, bitter, pungent and spicy. Radiating outward from French *nouvelle cuisine*, the spice was brought into Europe through several ports from the 1600s onward and fulfilled a unique role as an analogue of Black Pepper, though the flavors of the two plants are quite different. Its remarkable aromatic principle arises in part from paradol ($C_{17}H_{26}O_3$), a ketone found distributed among Ginger and its botanical relatives and allied with Cardamom. Ataré is much used in African cuisine, medicine, magic and traditional religion. Chewing 7 seeds, then waiting to receive their effects through the palate, is an excellent way in which to gain understanding of the plant's assertive principles.

As with many plants in the Ginger Family, its power is sculpted by a diversity of highly nuanced fractions of elemental Fire. Its planetary correspondence lies in equipoise between the Sun and Mars, each of which may be emphasized according to the nature of the magical operation. As used in folk magic and sorcery, its occult powers are beneficence, allure, wealth, potentiation, success in legal matters, divination, summoning, and fidelity.

The seeds have an especial effect of concentrating power within the human head, and more specifically the mouth. It is used in certain Hoodoo spells to effect enchanted speech: seeds are placed in the mouth and held there while speaking; it said to be especially effective for gaining employment. In allied magical contexts, the grains are used as a talisman of bringing money and success, carried on the person in a small red bag. Grains of Paradise are highly regarded as bringers of amorous delights, and have been added to philters, love-charms, and sprinkled on food.

The Spirit-Retinue of Grains of Paradise

Enlivenment, Encouragement, Expansion, Invigoration,
Combustion, Catalysis, Enthusiasmos, Articulation, Provocation, Magniloquence,
Volatility, Righteous Anger,
and Actuated
Command.

*

Of the Cardonium, or Herbed Wine.

In alchemy, the *Cardonium* was a preparation of medicated wine, whose character had been transformed from inebriating to curative by the addition of therapeutic herbs. This magnification of the active principles of herbs through the vehicle of alcohol operates on the same principle as an herbal tincture, but its lower ethanol content by volume disposes it especially to drinking.

The practice of altering or 'strengthening' wines with plant adjuncts was not new, it had been known in antiquity, and was particularly prevalent in the Mediterranean. Chemical analysis of ancient Egyptian amphorae, for example, reveal that several plants were used to augment wine, including Lemon Balm, Savory, Blue Tansy, Coriander, Thyme, Mint Yarrow, Fennel, Rosemary, Cassia and Sage. Augmenting the intoxicating potentials of grapes and yeast, plants possessing narcotic properties such as Mandrake (*Mandragora* spp.) were also used to spike ancient wines to increase their inebriating capacity, or to compound anaesthetic draughts.

Modern descendants of these preparations, used mostly in cocktails but sometimes drunk undiluted, are aromatized wines such as Quinquina (including such brands as Lillet), and the sprawling category of herbed wines known as Vermouth. Other winemaking traditions incorporated herbs for their antiseptic properties, such as the Greek retsina, using resin from such conifers as the Aleppo Pine (*Pinus halepensis*), and the Bulgarian Pelin, which adds measured quantities of *Artemisia absinthium* during the fermentation stage. Aside from the preservative qualities these plants impart to their host wine, they also contribute distinct flavorings.

Naturally, the Cardonium suggests itself as a ritual sacrament, and as an enlightening expression of a single plant's potentials. Using the basic principle of extraction of botanical principles into alcohol tincture, one may fashion ritual and ceremonial *Cardonia* by steeping herbs, roots, and other aromatic plant portions in the vintage for a short time. Although there are venerable traditions of creating herbed wine directly from fermented herbs, fruit and flowers, the benefit of steeping fresh plants into grape wines allows a more immediate process. It is also a more accessible approach for those who do not possess the equipment, expertise, or interest in fermenting their own alcohol.

The wine chosen as a menstruum for macerating herbs should be a single varietal of good quality, neutral flavor, and lacking complex aromatics. This is to magnify its virtue as a carrier of the herb's medicinal and flavor characteristics. As a general rule, wine with a higher percentage alcohol will have a greater absorptive power. White wines excel for capturing the essence of delicate flowers, fruits and leaves, while reds, being more bracing on account of their tannins, are appropriate for roots, bark, seeds and resinous leaves.

Here follow basic formulae for herbed wines derived from the addition of single plants. The herbs are steeped in the wine in a sealed vessel, in a cool, dark place, for at least 12 hours prior to straining and drinking. For the quantity of wine to use in each formula, all of the formulae use the vinous measurement known as the Demi (375 ml.), equal to one half standard bottle of wine, unless otherwise indicated. Before steeping, the herbs should be slightly bruised in a mortar to release their aromatics.

For White or Rosé Wines

ARTEMISIA: Many Wormwoods or *Artemisia* species are too bitter to use, and thus the preparation must be fashioned with this, and the preference of the user, in mind. Among my favorites is California Mugwort (*A.douglasiana*), of which I use 8 grams, making certain the fresh herb is well bruised.

CARDAMOM: 10 dried Cardamom pods.

CARNATIONS: Using fragrant or spiced varieties, such as 'King of Blacks' or 'Grenadin'. Take 30 grams of the fresh, whole flowers, and steep them in in a sealed vessel for 24 hours.

CORIANDER: A mixture of green and ripened seed should be steeped, for a total of 10 grams in weight.

DITTANY OF CRETE: The herb *Orignanum dictamnus*, of the Mint Family. Use 30 grams of the fresh flowers, which are superior for this purpose to the leaves.

HUMMINGBIRD SAGE: At noon, or after the plant has been exposed to full sun for at least two hours, gather 20 grams of the fresh flowers and steep as per the formula. For this preparation, one may use white, red, or a neutral rosé.

NEROLI: Of freshly harvested Orange flowers, take 30 grams. One may also use the dried flowers, but in no wise do they equal the perfuming quality of those freshly harvested.

PELARGONIUMS: The vast array of scented Pelargoniums provides us with ample opportunities for scenting wine. Rose, Clove, Citrus, and Chocolate are but a few of the scented varieties to be considered. A personal favorite, and one with impeccable garden appeal, is 'Skeleton Rose' Geranium (*Pelargonium radens*). Use 5–15 grams of fresh leaves.

ROSE: Of newly gathered Rose petals, use 20 grams. Strongly scented varieties are best, such as Apothecary Rose.

ROSEMARY: Rosemary flowers, 30 grams. If the leaf is to be used, 15 grams is steeped in either White or red wine as the menstruum.

SAFFRON: 30 Saffron stigmas, steeped 24 hours.

SCARLET SAGE: This indicates the Mexican native *Salvia gesneriflora*, sometimes found as a garden ornamental. Use 20 whole fresh flowers, steeped 24 hours.

VANILLA: A dry white varietal such as Semillon benefits and magnifies Vanilla's balsamic nature. Use 10 grams of the dried pod.

VIOLETS: 20 grams of the fresh flowers, 24 hours before filtering.

For Red Wines

BLACK PEPPER OR CUBEBS: 2-20 whole, crushed fruits, depending on the intensity of flavor desired.

CANNABIS: For a draught of lassitude which nevertheless exhilarates, infuse 7.5 grams dried flowers of Cannabis in 375 ml of either red or white wine, depending on the strength of the herbal material. The maceration is best if allowed to rest for 24 hours before straining. Drink with care, higher doses induce stupefaction.

CINNAMON: Bark of *Cinnamomum zeylanicaum*: 5 grams.

CLARY: Use 10–15 grams of fresh Clary, using flowers and aerial portions. The amount of herbal material may need to be adjusted based on strength.

CLOVES: 10–20 broken fruits, the amount determined by the intensity of spice desired.

GINGER: 5–10 grams of the bruised rhizome.

JUNIPER: Into a large steeping vessel place Juniper 25 juniper berries, bruised or broken slightly in a mortar. These are covered with 375 ml red wine, preferably one with a strong tannic backbone.

LAVENDER: Leaves, flowers, or a mixture of the two may be used in the quantity of 10 grams.

MYRRH: Owing to the difficulty of dissolution of this resin into alcohol, it is best to use Tincture of Myrrh in the amount of 5 ml.

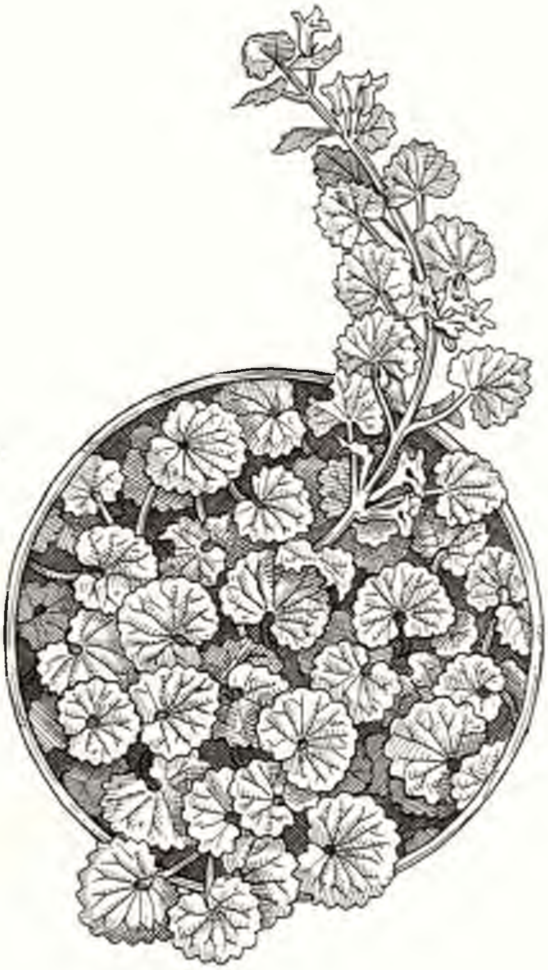
MYRTLE: If it is the green leaves and flowers which are used, pick 30 g in the summertime, and use white wine. If using the fruits, pick 25 grams, and use red wine as the menstruum. A 24-hour maceration is recommended.

OAK: Spring leaves, gathered fresh and chopped, enliven a white wine with a profusion of vernal flavors with a minimum of tannins.

ORANGE ZEST: 25 grams steeped for 18-24 hours. Either white or red wine may be used as the basis of this Cardonium.

SAVORY: Use 15 grams of the leaves steeped for 24 hours, an amount which can be increased if desired.

THYME: Gather 20 grams fresh Thyme leaves and flowers, brushing out all debris. Into a clean vessel, inter the plant material, covering with 375 ml of wine 12-24 hours.



GROUND IVY

Glechoma hederacea

Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

AROMATIC, creeping *Glechoma* is a perennial herb with blue-violet flowers and distinctive reniform leaves with scalloped edges. Native to Eurasia and introduced well beyond, in some situations it is weedy and considered noxious. It is a toxic forage for horses, and for this reason it is often named as a poisonous plant in government agricultural bulletins. It prefers shady, moist ground, and can become opportunistic in the garden.

The whole of the herb has a balsamic odor and a bitter taste, redolent of Mint. Among the ancients, Ground Ivy was often added to wine, and by the early Saxons to clarify beers and provide piquancy, as well as serve as an antimicrobial and preservative. It is accordingly also known by the name Ale-Hoof. Its action upon the body is stimulant, diuretic, anticorbutic, astringent, and tonic. As used in folk remedies, it has been employed for kidney disease and spastic conditions of the gastrointestinal tract, as well as to treat jaundice. It was also inhaled, either as a snuff or the aroma from the crushed leaves, to relieve headache.

In planetary correspondence, it is aligned with the Sun and Venus, this combination of attributes encompassing the virtues of triumph and fecundity—the very calling-card of the weed. As such, it is useful in magical works of establishing Dominion.

In European folk magic, particularly in Germany and the Scandinavian countries, it has enjoyed a reputation as an amulet against witchcraft. In South Slavic traditions, *Glechoma hederacea* is one of several plants important as an amulet on St. George's Day, used for the protection of the family, house and livestock. In Germany, wreaths of Ground Ivy were hung on fences on Walpurgisnacht, through which one was said to be able to glimpse witches. It was also employed as an amulet of protectionion from *maleficia*.

GROUNDSEL

Senecio vulgaris

Asteraceæ (Sunflower Family)

THE GENUS *Senecio*, or True Ragworts, contains approximately 1300 widely distributed species and is characterized by one of the largest and most successful plant genera extant. Such common names as Ground Swallower, Staggerwort, Ragweed, and Devil Dums hint at its weedy proclivities, as well as its saturation with poisonous principles. Its planetary rulership is often ascribed to Venus, but its acrid leaves and toxicity also firmly establish its dominion in the shaded plot of Saturn. Classed nearly everywhere as a noxious and annoying weed, Groundsel nevertheless possesses a powerful retinue of plant venoms and magical virtues.

In medicine and magic, the aerial portions are the parts chiefly valued. Strongly emetic, some species of Groundsel have been employed as a vermifuge for children. A strong infusion can be used a wash to soften rough hands. The leafy stem was in former times the base for emollient poultices, and Romany cures make effective use of the strong decoction for flesh wounds.

On auld broom-besoms, and ragweed naigs
They flew ower burns, hills, and craigs.

G. HENDERSON
The Popular Rhymes, Sayings and Proverbs
of the County of Berwick, 1856

Folklore tells that Groundsel thickets are inhabited by fairies. The plant was thought to have the power to transform into a magical horse that a witch could then mount and ride to the Sabbat. The plant was worn by women on the bosom as a charm against malaria and other fevers, and Scottish milkmaids used the root to prevent bewitchment of cream. The root has traditionally been used for its power against the Evil Eye. Several *Senecio* species are important herbs of power in the present-day magical traditions of Northern Peru, as documented by Bussman, Glenn and Sharon (2010). Their uses range from dispelling 'bad airs' to hallucinogens and enhancement of clairvoyance.

S. jacobea is one of several exceptionally venomous Ragworts, replete with pyrolizidine alkaloids and known to be carcinogenic. Other important chemical particulars of *Senecio* species with notable degrees of toxicity include senecionin, retrarsin, and isatidin. Ingestion of some Groundsels can cause grave liver damage, including cirrhosis and necrosis.

GUELDER ROSE

Viburnum opulus

Adoxaceæ (Moschatel Family)

A SHRUB growing in Europe, Asia, Britain and North America, found in wetlands and riparian corridors. Reaching a height of up to 4 meters, its flowers appear in late spring; they are white and globose, giving rise to the common name Snowball. The shrub is naturalized in North America, and is also known as Cramp Bark, from the usage of its inner bark as a tea for stmach cramps. The tart red fruits are edible but should be eaten sparingly due to gastrointestinal upset.

In North American root-magic, the roots of the shrub are dried and used as *Devil's Shoestrings*, prized in countermagic to tie up enemies or thwart curses. The wood of the Guelder Rose was once made into arrows, and well-preserved examples of such accompanied the corpse of Ötzi, the man found frozen in the Ötzal Alps and dated to 3300 BC.

GUM ARABIC

IT IS derived from several Acacia species, such as *Acacia senegal*, a tree growing to 7 meters in height, and native to Senegal and Sudan. A yellowish exudate is obtained by bark incision, left to harden in the sun, then collected from wounds on the trunk and branches. This darkens with age, and in commerce may be found either as resin tears or as a ground powder. Known to the Greeks of antiquity as Egyptian Gum, it has been a prized export of Africa since 1700 BCE. It was known to the European alchemists as Serapinus. In Africa, where it is produced, the gum is regarded to contain *baraka* and is still used for protection from witchcraft and evil spirits.

It was used by the ancient Egyptians for the preparation of colored inks. Gum Arabic is a botanical hydrocolloid, making it an excellent emulsifying agent for suspending components in solution. This valuable property increases the efficacy of formulations of water-based paints. It is also the active ingredient in *Gomme*, or old-fashioned Gum Syrup, which is added to cocktails in lieu of simple syrup for a richer, silkier texture on the palate. Though long neglected in favor of cheaper syrups, this product is currently undergoing a renaissance and several brands are available.

HACKBERRY

Celtis occidentalis

Cannabaceæ (Cannabis Family)

NATIVE to eastern North America, Hackberry is a fast-growing tree to 15 meters, with ovate leaves, white to pale-green flowers, and deeply furrowed, cork-like bark. Sweet, richly flavored berries ripen in autumn from orange to dark purple, and were traditionally used both as a food and a spice. Native Americans pounded the fruit to pulverize the seed before eating; these were consumed raw and used with meats to make pemmican. The berries are also an important animal food, borne out by the Dakota name Yamnumnuga, meaning ‘to crunch’. Botanically, the tree is currently placed within the Cannabis family, but was formerly classified in the Ulmaceae, the botanical family of the Elms, or with the true Mulberries in Moraceae. *Celtis laevigata*, as well as some other North American species, were similarly valued. There are about 60 species of *Celtis* worldwide.

While disparaged by landscapers for its ‘unattractive’ bark—which has a tendency to draw galls, malform, and become grotesque with witch’s brooms—its highly nutritive fruit makes it worthy of growing in compatible climates. The fruit can also be used to make wines, meads, and jellies. Due to its rapid growth, the tree is also useful for shade and slope stabilization. In Native American ethnobotany, the bark was used medicinally as an emmenagogue and abortifacient, as well as a remedy for sore throat.

In the rural folk magic of North Carolina, a twig of Hackberry nailed above the door was used as an apotropaic charm for averting witchcraft. Wood from a related African species, *Celtis africana*, is accorded great power, and stakes carved from it are hammered into the earth to drive away noxious spirits. In India, wood from a native Hackberry known as the Khirk (*C. tetrandra*) provides sawdust esteemed for making incense sticks.

HART’S TONGUE

Asplenium scolopendrium

Aspleniaceæ (Spleenwort Family)

HART’S Tongue is a short evergreen fern native to Europe and naturalized in North America, and inhabiting shady, moist glades, and by preference growing in clumps, often among stones. The herb is easily cultivated in the garden and there are several named varieties available. In some former taxonomies this plant was reckoned as *Phyllitis scolopendrium*. The cosmopolitan genus *Asplenium*, comprising the True Spleenworts, contains about 360 accepted species of plants.

The name *Asplenium* references the spleen, with which the plant was esoterically aligned, and used to tonify, or, according to other folklore, capable of consuming entirely with repeated use. In folk medicine of the British Isles, medicaments prepared from the frond have been used topically for burns, scalds and varicosities. Pliny the Elder remarked that the herb ‘Hemionium’, thought to be *Asplenium ceterach*, was effective in arresting hiccough. He also cautioned against its sexually wasting properties, as it was thought to cause sterility in women.

Hart’s Tongue is aligned with Saturn, and Venus to a lesser degree; its occult principles are Love, Attraction, Fertility and Protection against Poison. The fern is employed in love-magics in modern Romania, as noted in the writings of Mircea Eliade. One prayer exhorting the plant for this purpose is as follows:

As people quarrel over bread,
So may the girls quarrel over me.

Another spell from the same region requires going to a living Hart's Tongue, crossing oneself, and making an offering of bread, salt, and sugar. Then one makes nine prostrations to the plant, saying:

> For love have you grown, for love I
>   uproot you.
> O Hart's tongue, glorious Emperor,
> As you have had power to grow
> and multiply more than all herbs,
> as you have had power to multiply
> more than all flowers,
> so may everyone come running
> to him who has bought you.

The herb is then put in wax and worn on the person as a talisman, or, alternatively, added to a sacred bath. In contrast to the Romanian use of the herb to attract love, we find tradtional Welsh doctors recommending the herb to preserve chastity, eaten daily.

The plant has also been used medically and magically against snakebite, a feature somewhat in alignment with Adder's Tongue (*Ophioglossum* spp.). In North America, a native species known as Walking Fern (*Asplenium rhizophyllum*) was used by the Cherokee, brewed into a tea together with Hepatica to prevent dreams of snakes.

Some species of *Asplenium* may be regarded as 'resurrection plants', possessing the ability to completely dessicate in dry conditions and revive when environmental moisture is sufficient. As such they also refelect the esoteric and symbolic attributes of longevity, immortality, and resurgent youth.

HAWAIIAN BABY WOODROSE

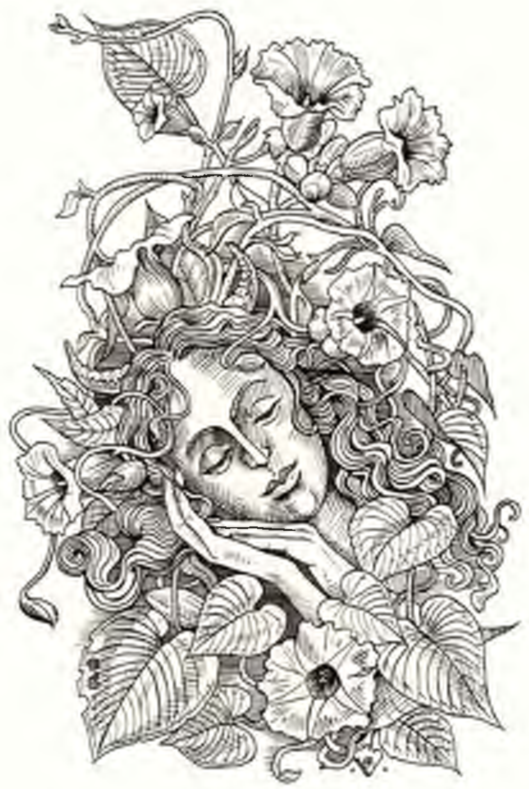
Argyreia nervosa
Convolvulaceæ (Bindweed Family)

A LIANA endemic to India, the Woodrose is now distributed in scattered humid climates over the globe. It possesses cordate leaves and bell-shaped flowers colored in pink or lilac, it expresses the convulvulaceous tendency for creeping and twining with tendrils.

The genus *Argyreia* contains at least 20 accepted species, with considerably more under taxonomic investigation. Although the plant is established in Hawai'i, it is an invasive species.

In Ayurvedic medicine, *A. nervosa* var. *speciosa* is known as Vurddharu, and is used to treat various maladies including oligospermia (low sperm count). Solvent extracts of fresh leaves, roots and flowers have shown improved sexual function in some animal studies.

In planetary correspondence, Hawaiian Baby Woodwrose is allied with the Moon and its retinue of attributes including witchcraft, visions, and governance of nocturnal mysteries. Its occult powers are Visionary, Aphrodisiac, and Atavistic Summoning. Seeds of the Woodrose contain lysergic acide and ergoline alkaloids (ergine, ergonovine, isoergine, chanoclavine).



THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF HAWAIIAN WOODROSE

Atemporality, Expansion, Multiplicity, Enervation, Languor, Dissociation, Obtrusion, Macropsia, Geometric Fractionation, Encroaching Phantasm, Peripheral Sussurus, Extrapolated Dimensionality, and Resurgent Memory.

In meditative practice, I have employed the seeds for rituals of an atavistic nature, and for memory retrieval. Their quality of entheogenesis, while comparable in some ways to seeds of Morning Glory (*Ipomoea* spp.), passes beyond the parameters of intoxication usually ascribed lysergic amides, generating unique states of body and mind. This includes a heightened communion between the tactile and visual sensoria, and the ability to re-experience and presently embody past memory. This would seem to derive from unidentified chemical principles, or novel synergetic effects between known alkaloids and other compounds.

Seeds are extracted from the round pods, taking care to remove the white layer from the seed coat bore thorough grinding. The resulting powder is eaten, or steeped in cold water for 6–10 hours, then strained through a filter and drunk. These seeds engender a languid visionary state comparable to LSD, the duration of which is 3–6 hours. Feelings of restfulness and tranquility may persist for up to a day following the consumption of the sacrament. Typically, 5–13 seeds are employed, but alkaloid content is variable.

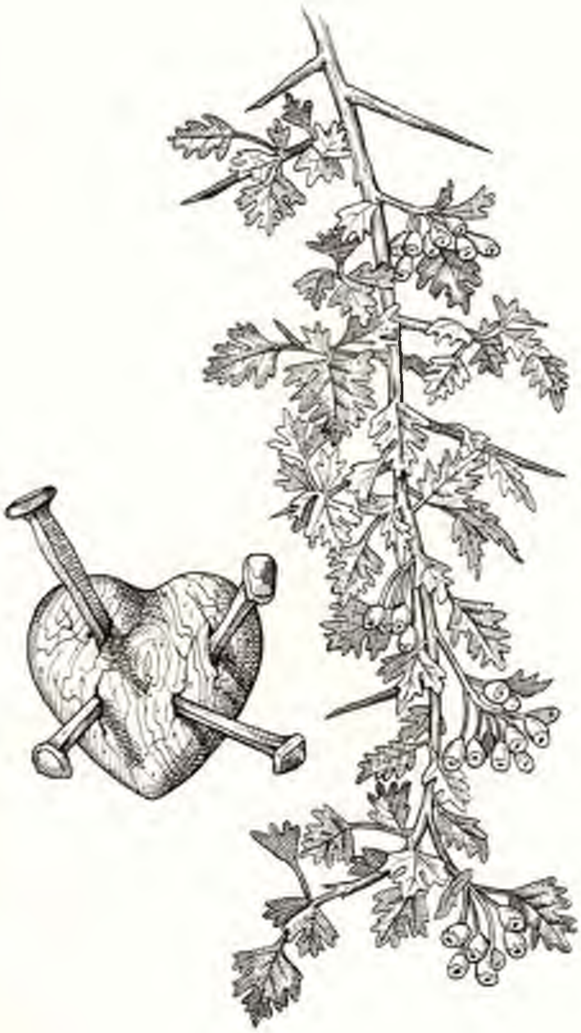
The herb induces mild nausea and or dizziness in some persons in the first hours prior to the phytognostic state, similar in symptoms to motion sickness. As such, a strong tea of fresh Ginger or Peppermint may be of use. Persons with a history of liver disorders should avoid internal use, as should pregnant women. There have been reports of unpleasant, lingering, physical aftereffects in some herbal lore and literature.

HAWTHORN

Crataegus spp.
Rosaaceæ (Rose Family)

ANSWERING to the common names Whitethorn, Freethorn, May Blossom, and Hag-Thorn, the Hawthorn is in many places simply known as the Thorn Tree, an appellation derived from its abundance of long, punishing spines. Botanically, true Hawthorns comprise the genus *Crataegus*, which contains several hundred tree and shrub species endemic to the temperate northern hemisphere; all are deciduous and can reach heights of 10 meters, though many are much smaller.

The common Hawthorn, *Crataegus monogyna*, being the most prevalent in Western Occult Herbalism, has deeply lobed leaves, white flower-clusters and blood-red false fruits called haws or hags, resembling a rose hip and containing two seeds. The aroma of its blossoms is variously regarded as delightfully erotic and suggesting fleshly mortification; it has been compared by some to the noxious vapors which arose during the Great Plague of London (1665–6). This complex scent, in part, arises from the presence of trimethylamine, an organic compound produced by the natural decay of human and animal flesh. Though this malodorous waft is present as part of the Hawthorn's floral bouquet, it lurks beneath other fragrance notes which are sweeter, rendering a beguiling atmosphere and disrupting olfactory presumption.



In herbal medicine, Hawthorn berry tincture is used as a mild vasoldilator, anti-hypertensive, and sedative. Extract of the berry is used as a heart tonic; the flowers of certain species such as *Crataegus oxycantha* may also be infused to relieve sore throat. These medicinal actions vary considerably with the individual, therapeutic use should thus be prudent, undertaken with professional medical supervision. Standardized extract of C. *oxycantha* was marketed in Germany as the cardiotonic Crataegutt Novo.

Black Hawthorn (*Crataegus douglasii*), native to California and the Pacific Northwest of North America, produces sweet and rich-tasting fruit that has been used traditionally as both food and medicine. Its flavor, texture and meat is of superior quality to the European species, thus it excels when made into wines and meads. Thorns of this species possess great length and strength, and are capable of drastic injury, attaining a dense hardness when dried. Fruits, leaves and thorns of other lesser-known species are worthy of investigation for their ethnobotanical potentials.

The tree is strongly linked with feminine power and love-magic, despite common attributions to the god-planet Mars. In ancient Greece, Athenian maidens bore Hawthorn branches at the weddings of friends as charms to ensure future husbands. The altar of Hymen, the great god of marriage, was lit by torches of the tree's wood. The Greeks also associated the tree with the goddess Maia.

An erotic charm of scapulomancy from the fifteenth century grimoire known as the *Munich Handbook* employs a shoulder-bone heated over burning Hawthorn wood. Dew gathered from Hawthorn leaves, especially on the morning of the first of May, is considered a powerful nectar for magnifying natural beauty, hence the old rhyme:

A fair maid who, the first of May
Goes to the fields at break of day
And washes in dew from the hawthorn tree
Will ever after handsome be.

The tree has a reputation for providing protection against evil for both mankind and livestock. An old farmers' charm to protect the mother of a newborn calf from sickness involved hanging the afterbirth on a Hawthorn. Branches of Hawthorn, nailed to the dairy barn, served as a charm to ensure abundant flow of milk from the herd. In Macedonian and Albanian folk magic, garlands of *Crataegus sericea* are hung on stable doors and butter churns on St. George's Day (April 23) to bring good fortune for dairy production. An ancient Roman potion compounded of Hawthorn was drunk as a protection from maleficia. A traditional cure for warts of English cunning-craft is to rub a live dew-snail on the offending growth, then impale it on a whitethorn and allowing it to die. In Southern Siberia, Kacha Shamans exorcised spirits of disease using a Hawthorn branch.

The Spirit-Retinue of Hawthorn

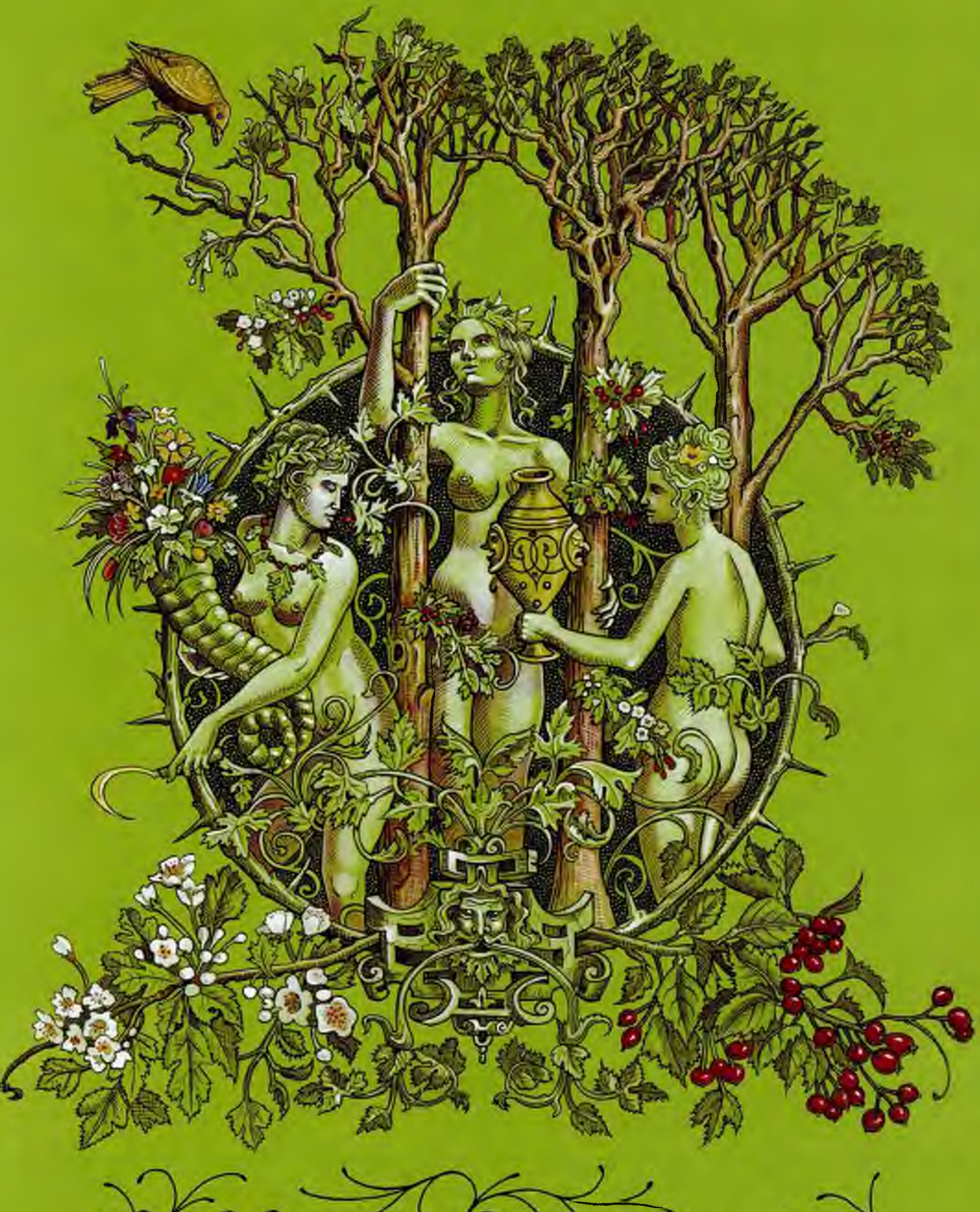
Ethereal Beauty, Swift Transfixion, Esurience,
Absorption, Harrowing, Shrieking, Savage
Maidenhood, Maternal Instinct, Senescent
Queendom, Sensual Confoundment,
Lurking Danger, Fleshly
Mortification, and
Bound Miasma.

Hawthorn possesses a severe reputation among present day Berbers. Echoing the incantations of folk magic is a folk song about the tree from the Djurdjura range of the Atlas Mountains:

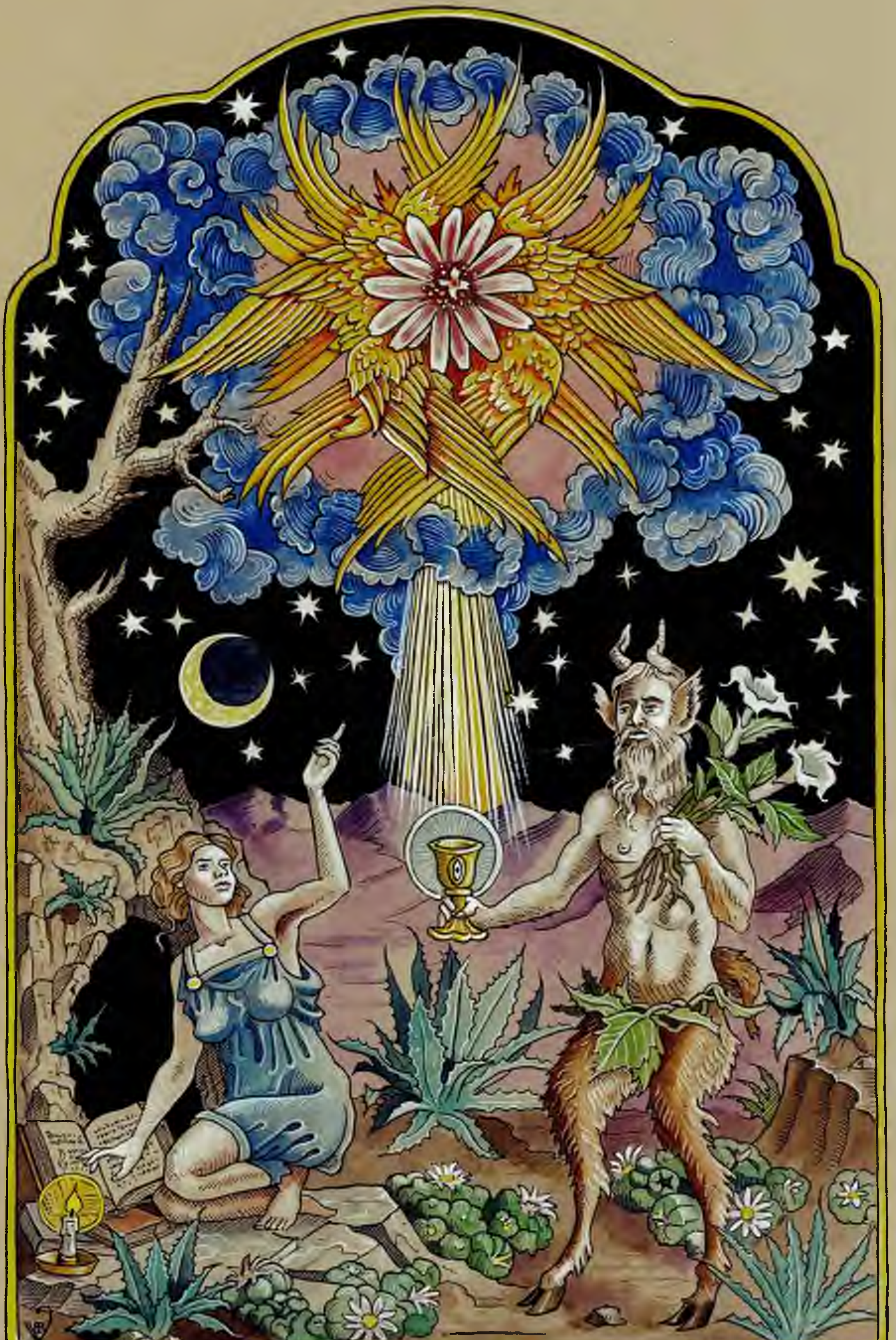
Greeting to thee, hawthorn;
Men have called thee hawthorn;
For me, I call thee *qā'id* which commands;
Transform this husband of mine into
an ass,
And I shall have straw brought him.

The hard and workable wood has a reputation for binding the dead, and in some areas of England it was customary to drive a Hawthorn stake through corpses that some feared might send forth their malevlent shades. Echoing this, some traditions of folk magic also mandated that stakes crafted for the destruction of vampires should be made from Hawthorn wood. The thorns also are favored in the image-magic of witchcraft, used to impale curse-effigies and rain destruction on enemies. A popular binding-fetish in English and Northern European magic utilized a sheep's heart pierced with Hawthorn spines.

Taboos on the Hag-Thorn are numerous and solemn. In many regions, the flowers are banned from being brought indoors, due to their odor of fleshly decay. To avoid abduction into the faerie realms, folklore admonishes us to avoid sitting beneath the tree's branches in May. In the British Isles, gardeners are warned against cutting its wood, an act sure to bring a curse of death

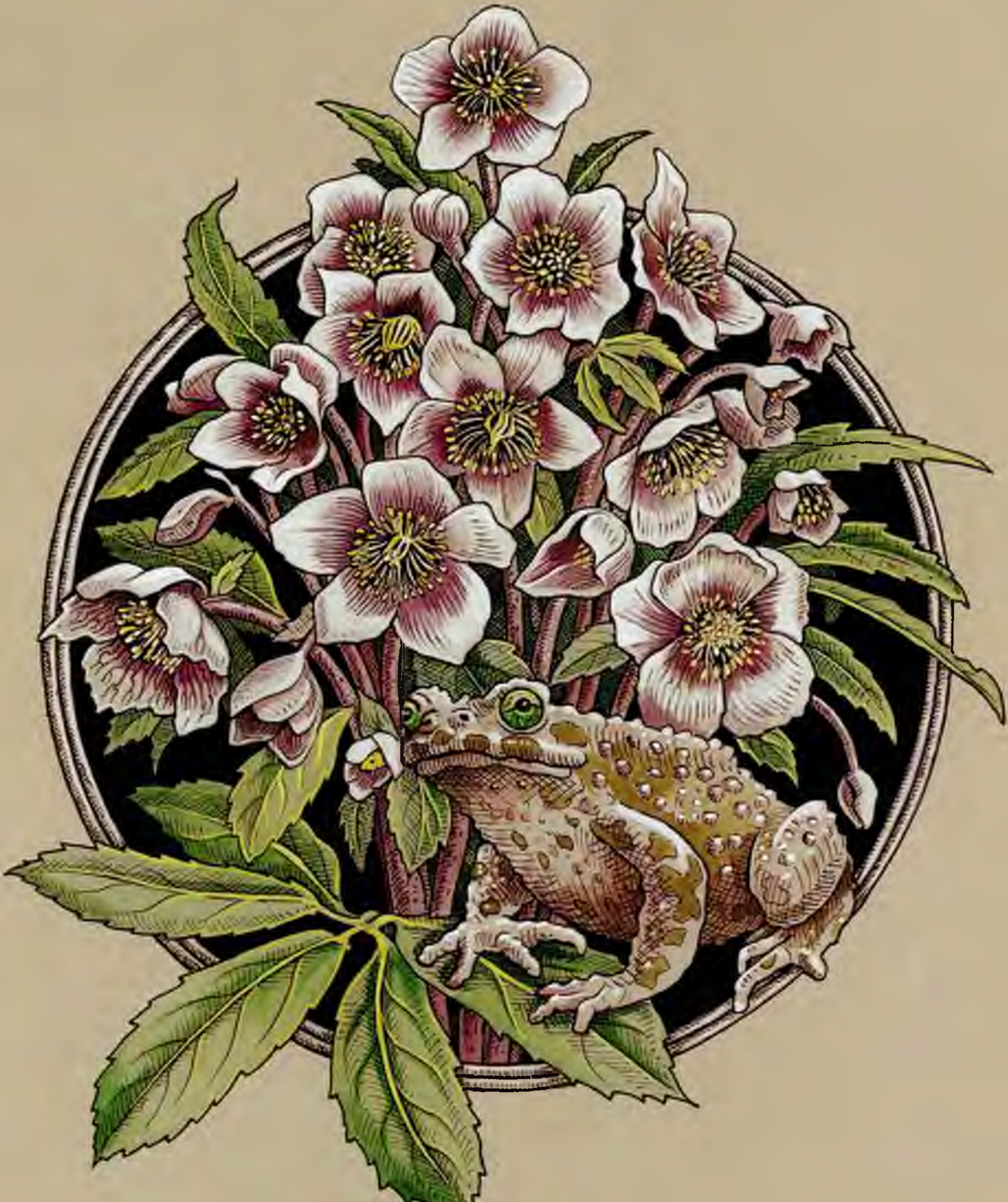


Laudabunt universa ligna saltus



Prophetabunt filiae vestrae

Samael and the Vine



Helleborus
Niger

or misfortune. In some folklore, cutting small amounts of wood is permitted, but one is advised to avoid doing so when the tree is flowering.

Despite avoidance of bringing cut Hawthorn sprays into the home, they were used as a garland-charms on the exterior of the home. On May Day, fastening its boughs on a cowshed assured an enormous milk supply. To leave a branch of Hawthorn at a friend's door brings good fortune, but in some branches of Lancashire folklore, a spray hung over a door indicated scorn. Hawthorn trees are sometimes planted outside homes for protection, thus fulfilling the magical station of 'house-warden.'

Black Hawthorn Cordial.

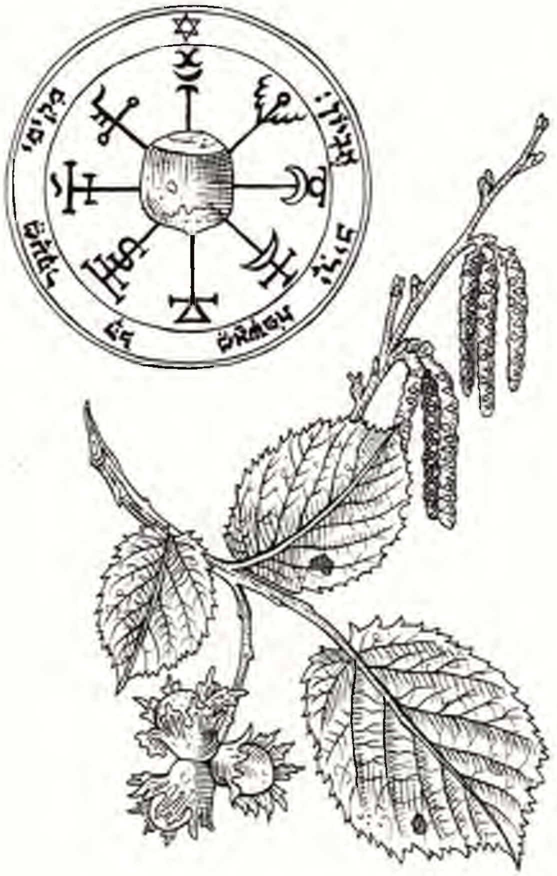
An ideal medicament for strengthening the body, and convalesecence from illness or trauma, and for the sublime pleasure of communion with the essence of the tree. The formula may be used on any Hawthorn but the Black Hawthorn (*Crataegus douglasii*) is ideal due to its large and nutritive fruit, which can exceed 1 cm in diameter.

Black Hawthorn fruits, ripe	100
Aqua Vitæ, 50%	sufficient to cover

❡ Select ripe fruits, but also those which, without being blemished or infested, are slightly over-ripe and are proceeding toward raisin stage; this will concentrate their sugar. Macerate in a sealed vessel for one month, strain and bottle.

CORRESPONDENCES

Essence: Transfixion.
Magical Powers: Binding, Marriage, Allure, Love-Charms, Cœrcion.
Planets: Venus and Mars.
Elements: Fire.
Deific Forms: Freya, Hymen, Cardea, Flora.
Patron Spirits: Færie.
Domains: Hedge.
Body Part: Heart.
Therapeutic: Security.
Affliction: Vulnerability.
Emblem: A veiled maiden in white, standing in a thicket, holding a human heart.



HAZEL

Corylus spp.
Betulaceæ (Birch Family)

OFTEN shrub-like in form, the Hazel reaches up to 9 meters in height, but can be considerably shorter under forest canopy. There are 17 accepted species of Hazel, being deciduous trees of the temperate northern hemisphere, and the trees often form a natural coppice, producing a cluster of exceptionally straight rods. Its leaves are soft, downy, rounded and serrate; it produces catkins and an edible nut. Hazel possesses a light, quick-drying wood that, when cured becomes quite hard, and well-suited for carving. The excellent wood can be soaked in water, shaped according to desire, then dried out to keep the new form. Not to be confused with the Witch Hazel (*Hammamelis virginiana*), Hazel is a tree of a different family and occult kinship.

The tree bears the planetary powers of Mercury, and its corresponding Element is Fire. Some of the many occult properties accorded the Hazel are:

- Conduction
- Protection Against Maleficia
- Peacemaking
- Banishing
- Congress with Faerie
- Immortality
- Marriage
- Fertility
- Success in Business
- Inspiration
- Illumination
- Protection from Lightning
- Conjuration of Fire Elementals
- Protection in Travel

In European occultism, Hazel is a preeminent wood of instruments and artifacts. According to folk taboo, the wood must always be cut at the waxing of the moon, the better to instill its flesh with fire and sap.

Hazel-wood appears numerous times in the old magical manuals, particularly employed for the creation of rods or wands for summoning and commanding spirits. In particular, a branch from a tree that has borne no fruit, or is wild, far from the dwellings of humans, is often used. In some Roman traditions, the Caduceus, the staff of Mercury, was originally a rod of Hazel given to the god by Apollo. One of the late 17th century manuscripts of Elias Ashmole employs three rods of Hazel to summon and bind a fairy into a crystal.

In many traditions, it is the preferred wood from which divining rods are fashioned. The properly consecrated rod is a forked stick of Hazel, known as the *Virgula Divina*, and is the famed branch for discovering subterranean water, minerals and gems.

FIVE NUT-CHARMS

- A Swedish charm to protect men from the nocturnal magic of evil sorceresses used metallic mercury, poured into a hollow hazelnut and sealed with wax, the whole then placed under the pillow at night or under the threshold.
- The folk magic of Catalonia used a single drilled nut, filled with Mercury, as a talisman against the Evil Eye.
- In the Scottish Highlands, the protective charm known as *cnò-chomblaich* consists of two hazelnuts found growing together naturally. These were carried on the person as a protection from malefic sorcery.
- A living spider sealed within a hazelnut and carried on the person was an old European charm against quartan fever.
- In England, September 14 is Devil's Nutting Day; Hazelnuts collected on this day have the most powerful properties, especially double-nuts. These nuts possess the powers of warding off rheumatism, toothache, and the spells of magical malefactors. However, nuts must not be gathered unripe, as an offended Hazel tree can be dangerous.

An old sailors' charm for a safe sea voyage employed sprigs of Hazel worn close to the body. Medieval pilgrims bound hazel branches to their walking-sticks as a charm to ensure a safe journey, and to ward off thieves. Russian magicians use forked twigs of Hazel to locate subterranean treasure, especially silver and its ore, a metal with which the tree is esoterically aligned.

It is also known for its powers of Invisibility. The tree's powers of concealing those whom it favors are attested as well in Swedish folk-charms using the nuts as fetishes. *The Book of St. Albans* (1496) gives a magical formula for Invisibility: carry a hazel rod on the person, its length being a fathom and a half, with a green hazel twig inserted in it. The folk magic of Novia Scotia prescribes a rude cross fashioned of Hazel wood, nailed above the door, to prevent a witch from entering.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF HAZEL

Conveyance, Authority, Proclamation, Swiftness, Instantaneity, Commerce, Manipulation, Orchestration, Scrutiny, Stealth, Coordination, Revelation, and Reliability.

HEATHER

Calluna vulgaris

Ericaceæ (Heath Family)

HEATHER is a perennial shrub varying in height from 20 to 90 cm, with pink or violet flowers, ranging in cooler climates and acid soils. Famous as a moor-dweller, Heather also inhabits understories of pine and oak communities, and is sometimes found amongst Beeches and Oaks, but otherwise dwells in open, windswept barrens. It is native to Northern Europe and Asia Minor, but has been introduced elsewhere, including the United States.

Heather is implicated as one of a quadrivium of plants from which the Picts of the British Isles may have brewed an inebriating libation. Archaeologists excavating a Neolithic settlement on the island of Rum discovered drinking vessels encrusted with a residuum containing spores of Heather, Meadowseet, Oats and Barley. A modern simulacrum of this putative beverage was fermented with the same ingredients in the form of an herbal ale. The supposition is not unlikely due to the well-documented traditions of making heather ale in the Scottish Highlands until the nineteenth century. In folk medicine, the plant is a mild nervine. For this purpose, an infusion of flowered branches is drunk by the moderate cupful (120 ml) when deemed necessary.

Among the planets, Venus infuses it with a strong expression of allure, as well as a fair face amid severe environs. Its occult powers are Beneficence, spirit-summoning, and it has also been used as to influence weather. Heather is known by some practitioners of folk magic to be an excellent suffumigant to summon rains or storms, sometimes in combination with ferns.

In Greek folk magic, smoke of burning Heather wards off the *Kallikantzaroi*: intrusive, rustic spirits, half man and half beast, who haunt the earth during the days of Kalends. Heather was employed in Russian folk magic, in combination with Thistles, both plants gathered on Holy Thursday, to keep hostile sorcerers away from the home. The herbs were placed under the house or burned in the stove. In witchcraft lore, witches' brooms were sometimes made of Heather.

In the British Isles, White Heather was considered a charm of beneficence and good fortune; it was frequently sold by the Romany for this purpose. One tradition relates that white Heather is of a more powerful and beneficent nature because, unlike the colored varieties, it is free of the bloodstains of the Picts, who were persecuted with brutal warfare on heath and moor.

HELICHRYSUM

Helichrysum italicum spp.

Asteraceæ (Sunflower Family)

IMMORTELLE is an herb growing to 60 cm in height, with glaucous foliage ranging from gray-green to silver, and luminous yellow flowers. As a drought tolerant plant requiring minimal care, it is a frequent addition to xeriscapes and in the herb garden is paired well with other white or silver leaved specimens such as *Artemisia tridentata*. The resinous scent is spicy and savory, evoking one of the plant's vulgar names *Curry Plant*; dried leaves and flowers may be used sparingly as a poultry spice. In Eastern European folk medicine, some *Helichrysum* species are used against jaundice.

The flowers, leaves, and their essential oil are the parts used; the genus *Helichrysum* is rich in aromatic principles, and many species are valued as a suffumigant to ward off evil or produce visionary trance.

The plant corresponds with the planetary virtues of the Sun and Mars, though its action is tempered by, and focused through Venus. Magically, the plant provides protection, as well as success in marriage, and serves as a love charm; in many European traditions it is also considered an aphrodisiac. In Macedonia and Bulgaria, Helichrsyum is accorded great power in the respective realms of magic, medicine and divine virtue; gathered on St. George's Day (May 6), the plant is sewn into the hem of garments and worn as an amulet. Italian folk magic uses branches of *Helichrysum italicum* as incense, burned on Christmas Eve to prevent the Evil Eye.

Its spirit-powers widespread, *Helichrysum* species also appear in the traditional magics of Southern Africa, and are used for a variety of sorcerous aims. Three species feature as incenses for increasing mental powers, aiding visions, as well as invoking the favor of the ancestors. These are suspected of possessing psychoactive properties and include *H. aureonitens*, *H. herbaceum* and *H. odoratissimum*. Zulu shamans employ a related species, *Helichrysum foetidum*, as a psychoactive ally to induce trance; the chemical particulars of this species include coumarins and diterpenes. *H. pallidum* is employed as a powerful charm to render one invisible or forgotten by enemies.

HELIOTROPE

Heliotropium aborescens
Boraginaceæ (Borage Family)

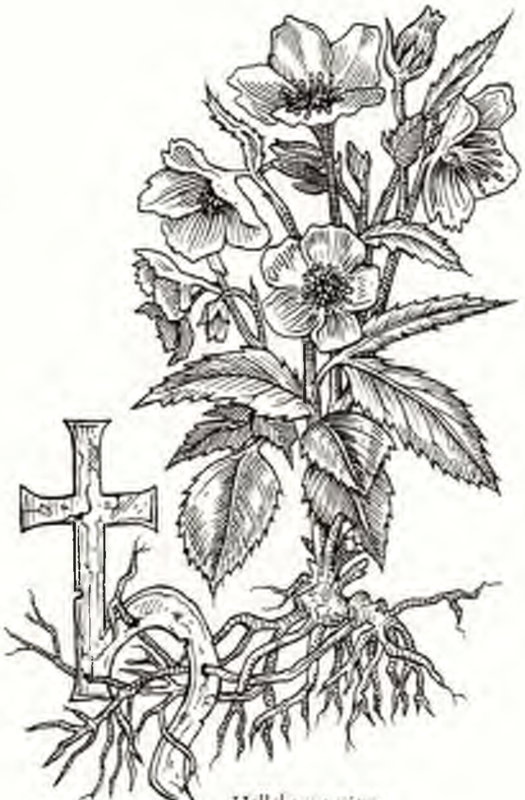
A VENERABLE denizen of old-fashioned gardens, Heliotrope is a perennial shrub reaching just over 1 meter in height, having purple flowers, strongly scented of coumarin, vanilla or almonds. Medicinally, it has been used as an abortifacient, which its use in magic is principally talismanic. An old divination charm placed a sachet of Heliotrope, Bay leaves, and a wolf's tooth beneath the pillow at night, for prophetic dreams seeking to reveal the identity of a thief. Seeds collected from this herb were held to bestow the power of Invisibility on the gatherer.

In the fifteenth-century Bavarian grimoire *The Munich Handbook* seeds of Heliotrope are used in a complex formula for a sorcerer to attain invisibility. The appalling ritual commands the sacrifice of a black cat, which must be eviscerated, its heart and eyes cut out. One seed of the plant must be placed in each eye socket, and two seeds in the mouth, while uttering a conjuration for invisibility. The body is then buried in an enclosed garden and irrigated for fifteen days with blood and water, after which time a plant will sprout.

HELLEBORE, BLACK

Helleborus niger
Ranunculaceæ (Buttercup Family)

KNOWN by its ancient name Melampodium, the venom-bearing Hellebore is a low-growing herbaceous perennial with palmate leaves, and a dark colored rhizome, hence its eponymous quality of 'blackness'. Its flowers are usually white, though many horticultural hybrids specifically of *H. orientalis*, have developed wide color variations. Most Hellebores grow on calcareous soil in Beech and Oak woodlands, or in open grassy areas, blooming in the dead of winter, even in the clutch of snow, hence its vulgar name 'Christmas Rose'. Black Hellebore is a denizen of the damp shade. The genus *Helleborus* contains 13 accepted species, all of which are toxic in various degrees. Many are available as garden cultivars, providing an enchanting, though somber, constance in the landscape.



Helleborus niger

As with many Ranunculaeæ, Hellebore is a drastic purgative and a strong gastric irritant. In the 1652 work *The Hermeticall Banquet, Drest by a Spagiricall Cook for the Better Preservation of the Microcosme*, we find Hellebore listed as a natural enemy of the stomach, together with such things as 'Greene Soure Fruits, Cole-worts, Garlick, Brains, Fat Meats, Radishes and Old Nuts.'

> And Xenocrates cured mad men with Musical tunes, which Instruments might be easily made of Horses Shank-bones, or the hollow stalks of Hellebore.
>
> GIAMBATTISTA DELLA PORTA
> *Magia Naturalis*, 1588

Hellebore is a poison of decided infamy; all parts of the plant render up venoms, though it is the root which is usually favored. Black Hellebore contains the irritant protoanemonin and varied saponins, which raise blisters on the skin. The glycosides heleborin and hellebrin also assert a strong presence: chemically related to telocinobufagine, a venom of toad skin, they affect cardiac muscle in a similar mannner as Foxglove. Before the grim twilight of unconsciousness or cardiac arrest, the victim suffered burning of the mouth, slavering, a great roaring in the ears, and demonic visions. In ancient times it was used to make dread wine known as Vinum Phthorium, a famous abortifacient. In present-day alternative medicine, the root is also used in homeopathy.

In antiquity the Athenian Solon is said to have poured Hellebore into the water supply of a town his army was besieging, poisoning them into surrender. The potent extract of the rhizome was also used in the Middle Ages as a utensil of murder.

The Spirit-Retinue of Hellebore

Disorientation, Perturbation, Raving, Intrigue, Blistering, Trephination, Skullduggery, Feverish Confoundment, Grim Revelations, Burning Evils, Epiphanic Irruption, Lurid Puffing, and Rank Disgorgement.

As used in occult operations, its magical spectrum ecompasses coercison, banishing, cursing, warfare, and protection for livestock. It is also sometimes found as a component of love-charms. A time-honored Ally in Saturnian rites, Black Hellebore is sometimes found as a component of necromantic incense.

Hellebore, you are my Rose of Sharon,
The door of silence is opened,
Creation shall dance forth from
perfection's lips,
It has cracked our faces and hearts of Stone,
The sweetness of this joy is, is not, the
eternal manna.
Amen, twice Amen, we are, we are not,
We are one, we are not.
In your suffering, you need no healing,
All is perfect unto a dance of glory
unto god.

ANDREW D. CHUMBLEY
Stultus, 1985

The root has been also been used as a magical amulet for protection. Dioscorides noted the use of Hellebore scattered about the house as a protection from evil, and as an agent of exorcism. In the the Middle Ages, Root of Hellebore was employed in a popular charm to ward off plague.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Coercion, Insanity, Ecstasy, and Necromancy.
Planets: Saturn and Pluto.
Element: Fire.
Deific Forms: The Muses, Saturn.
Star: Algol (β Persei).
Patron Spirit: Ghoul.
Esoteric Concept: Enemy.
Body Part: Brain Stem.
Therapeutic: Swift Intervention.
Affliction: Impassivity.
Emblem: An ecstatic poet inscribes words on parchment, counseled by a devil, who whispers in her ear.

HELLEBORE, WHITE

Veratrum viride, Veratrum album
Melanthiaceæ (Bunchflower Family)

KNOWN also as the False Hellebores, there are 28 accepted species in the genus *Veratrum*, all poisonous, and all possessing a preternatural beauty. The two broadly distributed species most generally known as White Hellebore are *V. album*, native to Fennoscandia and Eurasia, as well as *V. viride*, occuring in Canada and the Northern United States. It flourishes in a wide range across the Pacific Northwest, from Alaska south to Northern California. Theophrastus states that a species of *Veratrum* may have been present in the mountains of ancient Greece, though the precise botanical identification of 'White Hellebore' is in dispute. Genus *Veratrum* is of no botanical relation to Black Hellebore (*Helleborus*), instead bearing the name as a shared link through concentrated poison.

Depending on species, the herb ranges from 50 cm to 2 meters in height, inhabiting boggy soils in montane environments, open meadows and riparian corridors. Its bears a superficial resemblance to a cornstalk, with wide, deeply ribbed laneceolate leaves and flowers with six petal-like tepals. The unusual flowers are often green, or whitish green; the plant reproduces by seeds, as well as asexually through a creeping rhizome. A Eurasian species, *Veratrum nigrum*, has purple flowers and one of the richest and most diverse alkaloid profiles of the genus. Formerly classed in the Liliaceae, or Lily Family, *Veratrum* bears a striking resemblance to other former Lilies which have since been taxonomically separated into their own families, such as the Squills and Hyacinths.

In areas where it grows, it is well known to ranchers for its propensity for poisoning livestock. All parts of the plant are toxic, but concentrations of the venom are especially pronounced in the root. A lethal dose of the dried root, when taken internally, has been calculated in the weight of 1-2 grams. A native California species, *V. californicum*, is particularly venomous, containing toxins with known teratogenic effects, particulary cyclopia. In most places where it grows, there is some ethnobotanical medicinal use as a topical plaster for rheumatism.

Like True Hellebore, it is strongly aligned with Saturn, but also the Moon, particularly given its moist habitat, pale countenance, multipilicty of visage, and tendency to provoke derangements. Its occult properties are strongly apotropaic, protecting the user against witchcraft and the influence of vile entities, but it also is a source of power for turning Fortune to one's desire.

In Fennoscandia, the Sami used the powdered root of *V. album* as a stimulating snuff before Tobacco was widely available. A small amount was snuffed, which then provoked violent sneezing, so that exposure to the poison was brief and controlled. On observing this use, Hans Lilienskiold, the late 17th century district governor of Finnmark, was moved to remark "If the tobacco-hungry knew of its use, little would be left standing." Human psychoactivity through this route of use is unknown, though probable given the plant's chemical principles.

The plant also has well-established ethnobotanical traditions in North America. The Blackfoot used the root of the plant as a health-giving snuff for clearing the respiratory tract, similar to the Sami. In the Pacific Northwest, the Salish carried the root as a charm to repel noxious spirits, and the Gitxsan of British Columbia have used it for a wide variety of magical and medicinal purposes, including a ceremonial smudge for purification, and to increase success in hunting. The Haisla used the root to drive away evil spirits and used it as a talisman for luck.

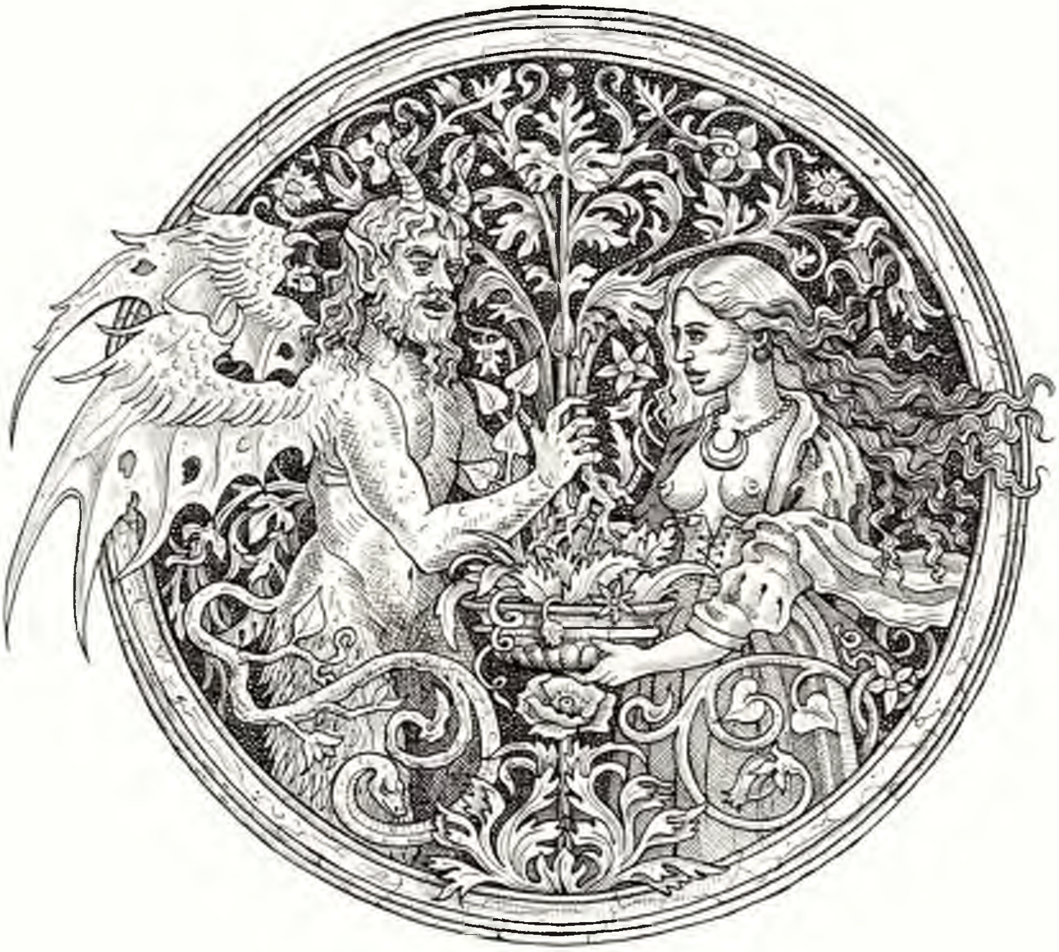
Herbal Cunning as an *Indicium* of Witchcraft

THE legal term *indicium* was employed in sorcery and witchcraft trials of the Middle Ages through the early modern era, used to denote an 'indication' or evidence, of the crime. *Indicia* of witchcraft could number in the scores or even hundreds, some of the better known among them were marks on the body and the presence in the home of such animals as toads. Not all were equal in gravity: certain of the *indicia* were, for example, considered sufficient for torture (*indicium ad torturam*), while others were given considerably less standing. Among these evidences, which for centuries filled inquisitors' manuals and judicial tractates, were a number of curious *indicia* involving the magical use of plants and herbs. Though ascribed to the power of the Devil, such magical herbal practices do not conform to the better-known *indicia* characterised by inversion of Christian ritual, such as profanation of the host, and in many cases likely represent traditional folk-systems of occult herbalism.

While plant-related *indicia* were rarely sufficient, on their own, to secure conviction of witchcraft, they formed an important component of the corpus of charges against the accused. A recurring type, though variable in its features, was the act of ritually harvesting herbs. Among the many charges brought against one Jubertus of Bavaria in the Dauphine witchcraft trials of 1428–47 was the gathering, on the feast of St. John, of

> certain herbs for medicine, as specified in the proceedings, and on bended knees he first adored them, then extracting them in the name of his devils, and in despite of Almighty God, creator of all.

An anonymous inquisitional document circa 1460, *La Vauderye de Lyonois en brief*, includes



a liſt of some of the diabolic acts of witches, including "gathering herbs at certain times and with certain conjurations, with which they work evil..." The same source claims that witches paid tribute to the Devil with some kind of grain, on pain of a beating. Another fascinating inſtance can be gleaned from the pages of *Commentarius en Titulum Codices lib. IX de Maleficis Mathematicis Et Cetera*, written by Peter Binsfield in 1622. In his liſt of *indicia*, or proofs of sorcery and witchcraft he includes:

> 8. Finding in his possession a book on magic, or things inſtrumental in sorcery, as a jar full of ointments or magical things. This is so vehement that I deem it sufficient for torture if there is the slighteſt additional support... A moſt urgent *indicium* which suffices for torture is two persons seeing a woman ſtanding in water and throwing it back into the air, or a man in summer ſtriking a ſtone when a tempeſt is threatened, or a woman gathering flowers from various trees and putting them into a pot.

Bernard Gui's 1315 Inquisitorial handbook *Practica oficii Inquiſtiones* condemns magics using fruits and herbs, as well as collecting herbs on bended knee while facing the Eaſt and praying the Lord's Prayer, but earlier clerical works long predating the witch trials reflect similar concerns, and are indicative of prevalent magical traditions of herb-gathering. The 8th-century text *Indiculus Superſtitionum et Paganarium*, emerging from the circle of Boniface, was a liſt of condemned religious practices, moſtly pagan, excluded as anti-Chriſtian. Among them were various animiſtic magical praxes involving plants, such as tree worship, and long before this, St. Martin of Tours had explicitly condemned those who muttered incantations over herbs. Such magical practices, despite their anti-pagan gloss, were well in accord with the botanical magic of late antiquity, which incanted the virtues into plants before they were ritually harvested; many of the plant-related *indicium* reflect the outlines of such practices. Despite the passage of nearly two millennia, numerous traditional European herb-gathering charms of almost identical structure have been documented as surviving up to the present day, as with the Romanian rituals of gathering Mandrake and Belladonna. Given the prevalence of such practices in antiquity, as well as their presence in the modern era, one may reasonably posit herb-magic survivals during witch-persecutions.

Sometimes simply the knowledge of herbs was sufficient to be considered an *indicium*. Among the mass of initial evidence brought against the infamous Mathias Perger in the Tyrol in 1645 was being 'skilled in herbs and roots' and having 'an herb against worms', both qualities being marks of a folk-healer. Describing in 1557 the characteristics of witches, Jerome Cardan writes in *De Rerum Varietate* that "these uncultured women are wise in the virtues of herbs and cure the most difficult diseases, and some even predict the future."

Going beyond the notion of herbal knowledge as evil, or at least suspect, is the idea that Nature herself is the source of the forbidden power. Francisco de Toledo, Cardinal of Cordova, writes in the mid-1500's in his *Instructio Sacerdotum*:

> Demons work by a number of ways including by applying natural causes and hastening action, for they know the nature and qualities of all things. They will often make a tree grow by planting the seed...

In essence, the good cardinal attributes the powers of Nature, specifically the generative force of vegetal reproduction, to demons. In *De Agnoscendis Assertionibus Catholicis et Haereticis Tractatus*, written in 1572, Arnaldo Albertini, the Inquisitor of Sicily remarks that "these *maleficia* and incantations may be worked by natural objects—poisonous herbs, roots, stones et cetera, whose secret properties the demons know..." This attitude was not confined to the realm of witch-persecution, nor even geographically to England and the Continent. Nicholas Monardes' celebrated 1577 work on the early exploration of North America *Joyfull Newes out of the Newe Founde Worlde*, relates the following with regard to Tobacco and its use:

> ...in like sort the rest of the Indians for their pastime, do take the smoke of the Tobacco, for to make them selves drunk withal, and to see the visions... And as the Devil is a deceiver, and has the knowledge of the virtue of Herbs, he did show them the virtue of this Herb, that by the means thereof, they might see their Imaginations, and visions, that he has represented to them, and by that means does deceive them...

Among plant-related *indicia*, the concern of poisoning was also present. One example occurs in Paullus Grillandus' *Tractatus de Sortilegiis*, of 1592, where we read of severe penalties for persons accused of brewing abortifacient potions, as well as love-potions prepared from natural drugs. In *Responsum Juris* of the early 1600s, Ernst Cothman, Professor of Law at Rostock, made a systematic legal argument against a number of *indicia*, which had the result of absolving the accused; among these was the preparation of venomous pears and apples, the other was the purchase and possession of poison. These *indicia*, despite their seriousness, fell at the end of the list, behind more grave offenses such as nocturnal flight and keeping company with sorcerers.

Alone, such *indicia* do not of necessity reveal the presence of widespread herbal magic practice, but it is certain that the poisonous properties of plants, as well as their healing potentials, were part and parcel of the folk-herbalist's knowledge. In the context of European witchcraft persecution, the figure of the poisoner (*veneficus*) was often conflated with the witch. From the standpoint of the greater concerns of the witch-hunt, this association may be attributed to the criminality the two figures shared, or to the great medieval preoccupation with poison. However, among herbalists and doctors, knowledge of poisons is present even among the most ethical of practitioners, in order to ensure the safe use of medicines: protocols regarding dose and overdose, where any potentially toxic plant is concerned, is essential. Beyond this, the dual archetype of poisoner-witch was known from classical antiquity, as with such mythic figures as Circe and Erichtho.

Other plant-related *indicia* may be discerned. Nicholas Remy's *Daemonolatreia* of 1595 cites malefic spells effected either by uprooting plants or casting them against trees. Johan Caspar Westphal, in his *Pathologia Daemoniaca* of 1707 cites a case of 1657 in which two accused witches confessed to sprinkling a powder of Henbane and other seeds in a field, while calling upon the Devil. The result was the killing of a cow of a hated neighbor. Though *indicia* extracted under confession are suspect, this charm bears close resemblance to the great corpus of European seed-scattering charms, used mostly to bring confusion or ruin upon their intended victims.

Condemnation of the magical use of plants becomes even more curious when we note that similar practices were common among the clergy. The inquisitorial tract *Fustis Daemonum* of 1626, penned by Girolamo Menghi, one of the foremost authorities on exorcism at the time, states:

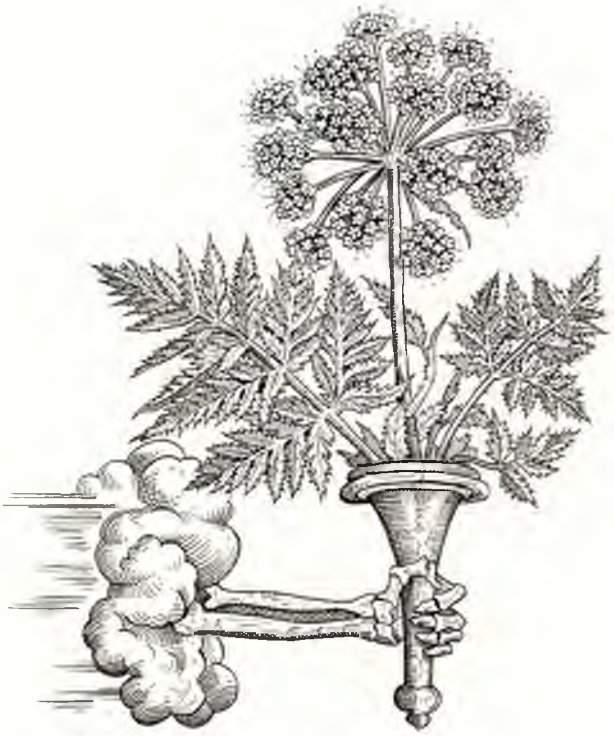
> A good preventative of demon possession is to take gold, frankincense, myrrh, exorcised salt, olives, blessed wax and rue, all severally blessed and put in papers marked with three crosses, and placed at each corner of the bed.

Valerio Polidori's book *Practica Exorcistarum ad Daemones et Maleficia de Christi Fidelibus Pellendum* of 1626 gives three incenses ('Profumigatio Horribilis') for driving away devils:

I. 6 drachms each of seed of Hypericum, Rue and Frankincense.
II. 1 drachm each of Frankincense, Storax, Galbanum, Laudanum, and Garyophyllum.
III. 1 drachm each of Galbanum Sulfur, Asafoetida, Aristolochia, and Rue.

The composition of these churchly suffumigations differs little from those appearing in contemporary spirit-conjuring grimoires such as *The Sworn Book of Honorius*, or in authoritative works on magic, such as Agrippa's *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*. Secular authorities too embraced the domain of herbal cunning: Johann Christoph Frömlich, a professor of law in the late 17th century, advised that the torture chamber for extracting confession from witches be "constantly sprinkled with holy water and a smoke be made with blessed herbs." Sylvester Prierias' *De Strigimagarum Daemonumque Mirandis* (Rome, 1575) another inquisitional document, informs judges and assessors how to properly torture witches: "they should arm themselves with the sign of the cross, and carry a parcel containing exorcised salt, blessed palms and herbs, and consecrated wax." This Church-sanctioned formula may best be described as exorcism via use of a talisman, a purifying salt, and herbal magic, a combination of practices familiar to the student of occult botany. The same would be true of the use of prayers to accompany the gathering of medicinal herbs, recommended by the Church in sixteenth-century England. While such practices were in some cases largely stripped of their folk-elements, other exemplars of herbal ritual within the Church resembled more closely their 'heathen' forebears, as with processions around the fields to bless grapes, grain, and hay.

Legal persecution of magical practitioners was not a new feature of Christianity, but was present even in pagan societies; ancient Greek and Roman attitudes toward sorcery and those who practiced it has been characterized as generally hostile. Yet with the anti-witchcraft *indicia*, specifically the condemnation of occult herbalism, we encounter religious authority used to proscribe a practice, but also, in an unacknowledged manner, to legitimize that same practice. That the same authorities who ascribe herbal power to the Devil would then employ such power for their own sanctified ends is indicative of a deeper truth underlying the ritual, namely that the plants possessed true power which may be put to diverse spiritual uses. This dual ethos of a singular power employed both to heal and harm is a common feature of folk magic, as with an eighteenth-century Norwegian spell invoking the powers of the Holy Cross alongside Asmodeus, Belial, Beelzebub, and seven other demons to force a thief to return stolen goods.



HEMLOCK, POISON

Conium maculatum

Apiaceæ (Dill Family)

AN ANNUAL herb to 2 meters high, with white umbel flowers, purple spots on the reed-like stems, and a large, carrot-shaped root. It is native to North Africa and Europe, but is now widely distributed. It inhabits meadows and byways, readily re-seeding, and large thickets of it are frequently smelled before they are seen. When bruised, the plant produces an affronting, inconsiderate odor sometimes described as "mousy". Perhaps a more accurate description of its smell would be stale, urine-soaked animal fur. Human fatalities have resulted when Poison Hemlock has been mistaken for Yarrow, a plant which it resembles not at all, as its morphology is much closer to Fennel or Angelica.

In ancient lore, the herb was considered one of the most powerful daughters of Hekate, Greek patroness of sorcery. This plant belongs to the first murderer Cain, father of sorcerers, as the purple spots on the stalks of Hemlock represent the 'marks' branded on him went he went into exile. Scottish lore relates that the Lowland fairies carried bows fashioned from the ribs of a man buried where three lairds' lands met, and arrows of bog-reed, tipped in white flints dipped in Poison Hemlock.

It has been used in folk medicine as an antispasmodic and sedative. Poison Hemlock was at one time used as an antidote to strychnine poisoning, and ancient Greek and Arab physicians also utilized it in the treatment of tumors.

Poison Hemlock has a reputation as the agent by which Socrates was forcefully ushered out of this world. In fact, the poison 'Conium' was derived from a plant called *koneion* in Greek, which is still unknown to us. Dioscorides left a description of the plant, which is certainly a member of the Dill Family, but the botanist Linnaeus, when creating his system of plant taxonomy, assigned *Conium* to this plant. According to Plato, there were no violent symptoms of Socrates' poisoning, an observation that is clearly at odds with what we know of Hemlock poisoning.

90% of the alkaloids present, occuring throughout the herb, are the deadly venom coniine ($C_8H_{17}N$), a muscle relaxant similar to curare, as well as related piperidine alkaloids. Coniine is considered a carcinogen, and occurs in all parts of the plant, the greatest concentration being in the unripe fruits, and considerably less potency in the root. Symptoms of poisoning after ingestion include retching, vomiting, increasing muscular weakness and pain, rigor of the limbs, inability to speak, blindness, respiratory dysfunction, and death. Coniine paralyzes motor nerves, ultimately causing death by respiratory failure. Seed of Hemlock was official in the British Pharmacopeia prior to 1908, and the tincture endured as the *Conii Liquidum* of the Codex.

As a rude painkiller, Hemlock was used in the Soporific Sponge of the Middle Ages. This sponge, saturated with the tinctures of Poison Hemlock, Mandrake, Opium, Wild Lettuce, and Ground Ivy, was used as the preferred method of anaesthesia during surgeries. All proceeding according to the highest medical hope, the patient would inhale the vapors of the sponge and embrace twilight sleep.

The Spirit-Retinue of Poison Hemlock

Stricture, Withering, Deprecation, Stuttering, Strangulation, Gurgling, Conquering, Spasm, Lugubrious Brooding, Labyrinthine Perambulation, Ophidian Constriction, & Gonadal Atrophy.

It resides under the power of Saturn, whose potencies it perfectly manifests. More modern astrological occultists may also assign it to Uranus (for castration, and radical disruption), or to Neptune (for illusion, and dissolution). Embodying the Saturnian aspect of sterility, the plant has long been considered anaphrodisiac, used to quash varied effusions of the human libido. It holds a place in Arabian ethnomedicine where it is known as an abortifacient and an agent used to cause sterility. Seeds were used in concert with opium, hellebore, and putrefied animal *mixtum* for the manufacture of fatal poisons in Ibn Wahshiya's *Book on Poisons*. A Hemlock compress known as St. Basil's Plaster was employed in seventeenth century Europe to check nymphomania and satyriasis, owing to its power of extinguishing "every veneral fire." Simon Paulli, in *Flora Danica*, relates that the juice of the herb rubbed on girls' breasts prevents them from fully developing, keeping them "properly small".

Hemlock's occult power mirrors its planetary investiture as well as its mythopoesis. As an herb of Hekate, it is aligned with operations of *veneficium*, or magical poison. Separated from the common criminal activity of murder, this term indicates more broadly the use of toxic substances in magical operations. As with most deadly plants, Hemlock possesses a dual ability to conjure foul spirits and repel them, thus care, intent, and means of use determine the difference. This quality is well illustrated in Agrippa's well-known incense formulae using Hemlock, a suffumigation which causes spirits to appear. However, the spirits are of ambivalent nature, as they are explicated neither as fair nor foul. In the case that the spirits are indeed foul, the addition of Parsley to the incense is the salvific which will cause them to flee.

It also has consecrative properties, aligned in certain respects with the plant's virtue of Chastity. Consecration of the black-handled knife of the grimoire *Lemegeton*, used for commanding spirits within the Magic Circle, requires that its blade be quenched in juice of Poison Hemlock and the blood of a cat. For this purpose, the fleshy stems of the younger plants were used, or the mortar-expressed liquid from the green, unripe fruits. Pressing of juice from the root was also possible, but owing to its overpowering fumes, and noisome qualities to the skin and brain, it is not a pursuit for the uneducated or foolhardy.

> Chemical experiments have proved that the poisons of the two hemlocks [C. *maculatum* and Cowbane, *Cicuta virosa*], especially coniine, taken in small doses and rubbed into the skin, can produce the sensation of gliding through the air.
>
> HAROLD HANSEN
> *The Witch's Garden*, 1978

Poison Hemlock, the root in particular, is one of the recurring ingredients mentioned in recipes for the flying ointments of the medieval witches, part of a shadowy, heretical tradition of European pharmacy. Together with hallucinogenic Nightshade plants and Monkshood, Hemlock forms one third of an 'unholy trinity' of plants commonly found as the pharmaceutical skeleton of these recipes. From my own first-hand experiments preparing raw Hemlock in various stages of growth, including the morass of toxic overexposure, I have concluded that this historical attribution with the Sabbatic unguent has much basis in fact. The fantastical medieval and early modern artistic depictions of witches are often dismissed as moralistic propaganda, but the representations of the old, physically ravaged hags in particular are ready surrogates for the plant's presiding spirit.

* * *

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Summoning, Exorcism, Coercion, Consecration, Funerary, Necromancy, and Chastity.
Virtue: Restriction.
Elements: Earth and Water.
Planets: Saturn.
Deific Forms: Hekate, Cain.
Alchemical Concept: *Projectio.*
Domains: Waysides.
Body Part: Nervous System.
Therapeutic: Sterilization.
Affliction: Lechery.
Emblem: A green serpent with purple spots, coiled around an upturned skull-cup.

HENBANE

Hyoscyamus niger; Hyoscyamus spp.
Solanaceæ (Nightshade Family)

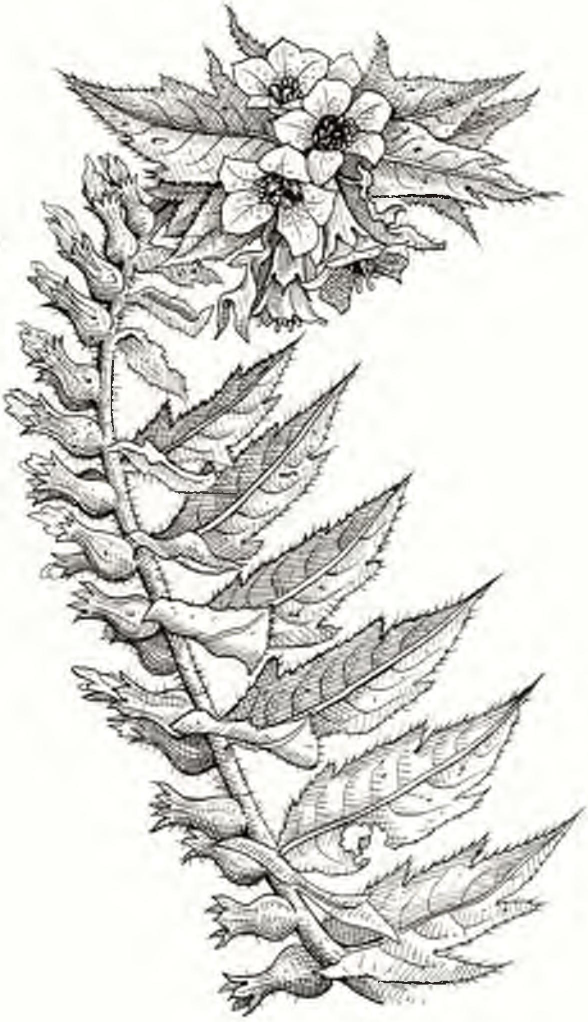
A HAIRY, sticky, odorous biennial or annual growing to one meter in height, found in wastelands, rural byways, and sandy areas of Europe and naturalized in North America. The flowers, which ermerge in summer or early autumn, are a pale grayish-yellow interlaced with delicate purple veins. Drying to a sharply-prickled husk, the seed capsule is filled with many tiny, grey-brown seeds. Offering poison, stench, stiff prickles, and an otherworldly palette of colour, Henbane is remarkable on all sensorial levels.

There exist about 15 species of *Hyoscyamus*: also important in the history of magic and sorcery are White Henbane (*H. alba*) and Egyptian Henbane (*H. muticus*). As a testament to the plant's hardy spirit, the seeds can remain viable over centuries, and in one case, seeds that were over 800 years old were successfully sprouted.

The portions utilized in medicine and magic are the leaves, flowering tops, and seeds; infrequently, the root is also used. In most places where it has grown in proximity to humans, it is a recognized narcotic and used as such, as reflected by an astounding litany of folk names:

Apollinaris
Belinuntia
Belone
Devil's Cabbage
Devil's Eye
Devil's Nuts
Hennebelle
Hog's Bean
Hypnotikon
Insana
Insane Root
Jusquianus
Pythonion
Stinking Nightshade
Stinking Roger
Symphonica

Egyptian Henbane (*Hyoscyamus muticus*) is there known as Sakran, or 'the drunken'. When considering the entire worldwide ambit of the genus, there are scores more.



> This is a drug in which there is an injurious poison which is fatal through cold and dryness, drying of the blood and its clotting in the heart and veins. It has the virtue of steering the spirit of the senses to penetrate from the brain to the nerves, to its natural egress.
>
> IBN WASHSHIYA AL NABATI
> *Kitab al-Sumum*, 900 CE

In ancient times, the narcotic properties of White Henbane (*Hyoscyamus albus*) were preferred over other species such as *H. niger* by Disoscorides because it was less likely to induce madness. In Greek folk medicine, the leaves of

H. albus were applied directly to the skin as an anodyne.

Taken internally, Henbane specifically affects the central nervous system: one experiences initial stimulation, soon followed by confusion, stupor, and disturbing visions. This is almost always accompanied by the grimmer somatic waymarks of the Nightshade herbs: dilation of pupils, a gradual drying of bodily humours, reduced peristalsis, and vasoldilation accompanied by increased blood pressure. Overdose gives rise to central narcotic paralysis, coma, and death. Neither boiling nor drying the herb destroys its poisonous virtues; medical formulae of antiquity prescribed the juice of Purslane (*Portulaca* spp.), taken with sweet wine, as an antidote for Henbane poisoning. The alkaloidal profile of the plant is dominated by hyoscyamine, scopolamine and other tropanes.

In therapeutic doses, the herb affects the peripheral nervous system. Oleum Henbane, an oil extracted from the leaves, is employed as a soothing balm for aching muscles of the arms and legs, and is much recommended for massage. For athsma and cough conditions, Native American medicine men recommended a blend of Henbane leaves, Thornapple, and various species of *Salvia* and *Artemisia*. Pliny reports that Oil of Henbane was made by steeping the plant in olive oil and pressing. The herb was used as a narcotic and anaesthetic in the caesarian delivery of Rustam, the ancient Persian hero. It also has some repute as a strong soporific; the 16th century Spanish chronicler Andres Laguna reported consulting a witch for his insomnia, who prescribed for him the very effective remedy of a pillow stuffed with henbane leaves.

In the 12th century treatise of Arabic pharmacology *The Dispensatory of Ibn-at-Tilmīd*, a recipe for a pastille to alleviate headache and bring sleep utilizes equal parts Myrrh, Opium, Henbane, Mandrake root peel and dry Mandrake, moistened in lettuce water and Nightshade-water. The triangular pastilles are remarkable because of their explicitly external use, being rubbed upon the forehead. A standard therapeutic dosage of the formerly-official pharmaceutical tincture was 2 ml, taken to remedy respiratory spasm and excessive mucus secretion. In pharmacy, the tincture has largely been supplanted in current times by hyoscyamine sulfate under the name Levsin.

According to doctrines of planetary correspondence it is principally governed by Jupiter and Saturn, though given the plant's chemical and spiritual aspects, the latter is more apt. However, Henbane exhibits a variety of planetary resonances which range beyond the Saturnian and are best contemplated given its intended use. If we consider its force of heat, preferred habitats, and strongly somatic activity, we may also faithfully align it with the Sun, yet its prophetic and divinatory activity as well as its duplicity is decided Mercurial. Its seductive beauty and the corpus of love-charms containing Henbane remind us that Venus is present within its leaves and flowers, and the aggressive nature of its fumes, as well as its spines, reflect the influence of Mars. In fair consideration of astrological holism, the plant also has strong Uranian and Plutonian proclivities.

Its occult properties are Divination, Protection from Maleficia, Lycanthropy, Madness, Atavistic Summoning, and Chaos. Pliny associated Henbane with death, recording its use in funeral meals and scattered over tombs. The Dead in Hades, who wandered beside the Styx, were crowned with Henbane. The herb also enjoyed general use in medieval Europe as an aphrodisiac talisman.

The Spirit-Retinue of Henbane

Metamorphosis, Disorientation, Amplification, Hypervigilance, Gibbering, Psychosis, Hirsutism, Caustic Effluvium, Parched Exhalation, Uproarious Klaxon, Febrile Hallucination, Masked Fervor, and Delirious Spasm.

The grimoire *Almadel* specifies a planetary perfume for Saturn consisting of Storax, Henbane, and root of Mandrake. As a matter of first principle, when both Nightshade herbs are burnt together in the brazier, a repugnant excrescence is generated, perfectly aligned with the planetary power, but often serving to distract and scatter the operation. The following formula is a needful reinterpretation, being my own preparation utilizing Gum Sandarac, also indwelling the leaden dominion of Saturn. added to balance the carbonaceous component with oleoresin, and to balance its malodorous qualities with a modicum of fragrance apposite that planetary god. Where Sandarac cannot be obtained, one may substitute an equal measure of resin of Cypress, or, failing this, Cypress twigs and dried green fronds.

Suffumigation of Saturn

Sandarac Resin	3 parts
Hyoscyamus niger, seed	1 part
Mandragora officinarum, dried root cortex	1 part

☾ Compound loosely and burn on hot embers.

Though native to Europe, the herb also made its way into North American folk magic. From Wise County, Virginia comes a spell for disinfecting a bewitched animal: a quantity each of dried Henbane and Nightshade leaves was powdered, then mixed with a similar amount of sulfur, and a pinch of copperas (green Ferrous sulfate). This suffumigant was thrown into a fire and, together with an incantation of the Lord's Prayer, removed the curse.

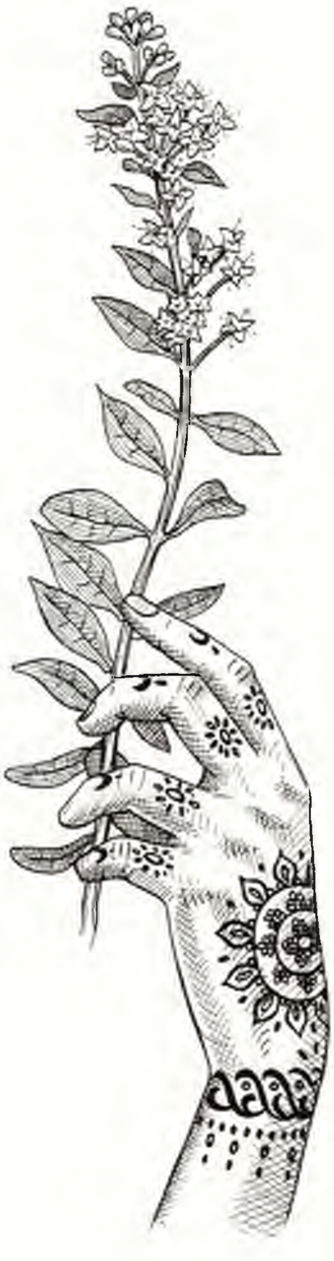
An old Bohemian book of practical magic discovered in Texas, entitled *Perfect and Tested Secrets or Various Medical, Magical, Chemical, Sympathy and Anti-sympathy Treatments* offers the following formula to cause rabbits to gather in a certain spot:

> Mix henbane, hermodactyls and saffron; add the blood of a young rabbit and put it in a rabbit's skin; then the rabbits of the area will all come to it.

If leaves are desired for tincturing or drying, the upper portions of the plant should be collected while in full flower; if the species being grown is a biennial one, leaves and flowers of the second year are preferable to those of the first. If gathering Henbane for seed, wait until August when the capsules ripen, taking the tops before the capsules spilt open. In either case, dry the herb in a warm, dry place with some light and active air circulation.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Lycanthropy.
Virtue: Wildness.
Element: Fire (Smoke).
Planets: Saturn, Sun, Mercury.
Star: Algorab (δ Corvi).
Presiding Spirits: Theriandric.
Domains: Ruins, Margins.
Embodied State: Atavistic Resurgence.
Therapeutic: Wildness.
Affliction: Civilization.
Emblem: A leaf-clad Woodwose, holding the severed head of a king in his right hand, and a club in his left.



HENNA

Lawsonia inermis

Lythraceæ (Loosestrife Family)

WITH known ethnobotanical import since the civilization of ancient Sumer, Henna is one of the most ancient plants of protection from the Near East. A shrublike tree growing to 7 meters in height, Henna is identified by its lanceolate leaves, sweet scented white flowers, and small fragrant brown fruits containing seeds, which are prized for their oil. Native to North Africa, it is naturalized elsewhere in the world where its many medicinal and magical properties are valued. Reflecting its spiritual properties of wardship, Henna is often cultivated as a hedge planting. The plant is also known by the names Kofer, Egyptian Privet, and Mignonette.

As a folk medicine it is a powerful stypic, antiseptic and astringent owing to the presence of complex hennotannins in the leaves. Accordingly, it is used against leprosy and other afflictions of the skin. These same tannic compounds are responsible for Henna's use as an enduring ornamental stain on the hands and feet, and for dyeing the hair and nails. Depending on strength and admixtures, the colors red, orange, reddish yellow, and brown may be obtained.

The Spirit-Retinue of Henna

Custodianship, Redress, Advocacy, Collaboration, Reserve, Consistency, Perfumed Cloisters, Outward Signs, Refined Ornaments, Restored Unity, Secured Grounds, Sweet Concord, and Pleasant Serenity.

Principally, Henna is a plant of protection from evil, not unlike the fragrant resins Frankincense and Myrrh in its holiness. This great strength encompasses its material and immaterial aspects and is on ready display in its medicinal use. Henna's power against malevolence is a refelction of its strong binding capabilities, features allied to its remarkable coterie of phytochemicals.

Healing charms of the ancient Near East applied the pounded leaves to the navel to draw out noxious disease-causing spirits and reduce fever. In Morocco, an ointment is made from Henna, Cloves and rose water for protection from evil spirits. In modern North Africa, Henna is sprinkled in the home to ward off malefic spells. It is also distrubuted among those visiting tombs.

> My beloved is unto me as a cluster of henna in the vineyards of En-Gedi.
>
> *Song of Solomon* 1:14

Regarded as a leaf from paradise, an old adage counsels "Wear Henna and Allah will be kind to you." Use of the plant is auspicious at weddings, and the plant is used in Moroccan spells to reconcile quarreling lovers.

CORRESPONDENCES

Essence: Security.
Powers: Protection, Exorcism, and Warfare.
Element: Earth.
Planet: Saturn and Venus.
Star: Capella (α Aurigæ).
Virtue: Assuredness.
Body Part: Skin, Heart.
Domains: Tombs and Shrines.
Eponymous Compounds: Lawsone, Hennotannic acid.
Emblem: A russet-haired woman in a suit of golden armor, adorned with fantastic scrollwork. She bears a spear and stands before a thorny hedge.

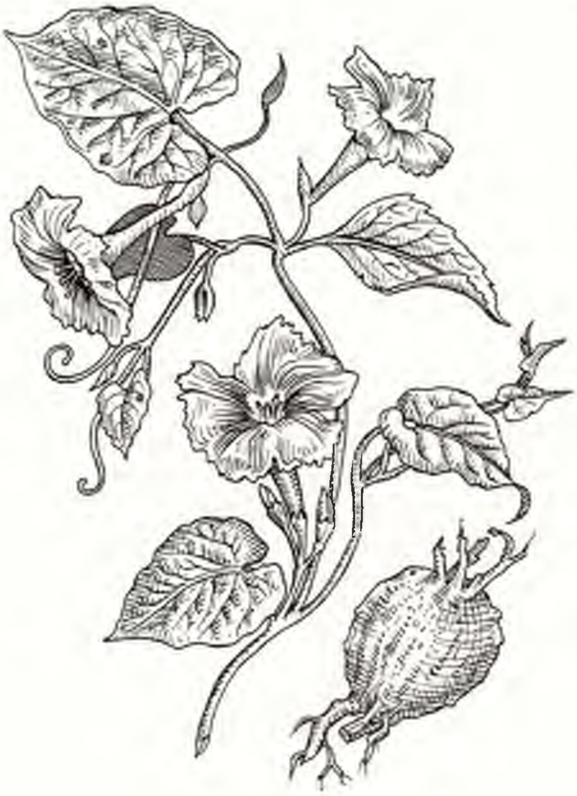
HIBISCUS

Hibiscus spp.
Malvaceæ (Mallow Family)

THE genus *Hibiscus* contains about 150 accepted species, with a great many still under assessment, and describes perennial and annual shrubs with showy flowers of diverse colors, thriving in the tropics and subtropics. Many exhibit general characteristics common to the Mallow family, such as demulcency, though some species such as the Rose of Sharon (*Hibiscus syriacus*) can be poisonous to animals. Because of its showy flowers and success in warm humid climates, it is a frequent garden plant in places like Hawai'i, Samoa, and French Polynesia, and is often used as graphical symbol of the islands. The species most often available in commerce for human consumption is the Roselle (*H. sabdariffa*), whose red sepals lend a tart flavor to teas. The genus is ethnobotanically significant and hosts a wealth of phytochemicals including antioxidants. The wood of the Sea Hibiscus (*H. tiliaceus*) exhibits unusual properties and is valued in the tropcs for carving and furniture making.

Prepared as a traditional Turkish aphrodisiac, Hibiscus flowers and the fruits of Sweet Brier are brewed in decoction as a tea and drunk twice a day for 2–3 weeks. In Guyana, the flowers of *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis* are boiled and drunk as an abortifacient, or to provoke delayed menses. Bengali folk medicines using the same plant are used to restore fertility, as well as for both male and female contraceptives. Current research from India demonstrates improved male virility in two Hibiscus species: H. *sabdariffa*, for increasing sperm count, and H. *macranthus*, for increasing blood testosterone concentrations.

Its celestial ruler is the Sun, together with Venus. The flowers feature in love charms and spells, and thus emanate the occult properties of Allure. Hibiscus species also feature in anti-witchcraft and protection magic. In East Africa, the leaves of H. *faulknerae* are used to make charms of protection, while the roots of H. *latissimus* are esteemed for their power against malefic sorcery.



HIGH JOHN THE CONQUEROR

Ipomoea jalapa
Convolulaceæ (Morning Glory Family)

A TROPICAL species of true Morning Glory, High John the Conqueror is a climbing vine with cordate leaves and dark pink, trumpet-shaped flowers, growing to 3 meters. Native to eastern Mexico, its specific name references Xalapa, Veracruz, its traditional point of botanical origin. The dried tuber, ridged and dark in color, is the portion esteemed by both medicine and magic. Fresh tubers are traditionally dried by suspension over a wood fire, hence the pleasant, sweet-smoky aroma some specimens of commerce exhibit.

Like many herbs of the Convolvulaceae, root of High John is a powerful laxative and purgative, owing to the presence of a bitter resin. In official pharmacy, 'Jalap' was also used as a name for a purging agent frequently derived from *Ipomoea* species including I. *jalapa* and I. *purga*; during its heyday, such a preparation could even be obtained from plants outside the genus, such as *Merrimia*.

High John the Conqueror root is a strong spiritual ally in African American folk magic. It dwells under the dual planetary emanation of Mars and Saturn, and its magical powers are sexual attraction, luck, money-drawing, trickery, removing obstacles, and the removal of curses. In these latter two functions, it thought to hold especial power over the Devil in his role as Opposer—the one who would bar the way.

The cured tuber is carried whole as a talisman, used in bags and charms, and prepared as an oil, which is also frequently used to 'feed' and anoint the root-fetish. Much in the manner of certain Orchids, the root can resemble a human testicle, and from this morphological correspondence arises its power in male sexual sorcery. My personal investigation of the dried root has chiefly been as a talisman to ensure safe travel or winning a negotiation; some money-drawing spells utilize the root in combination with a Mercury-head dime.

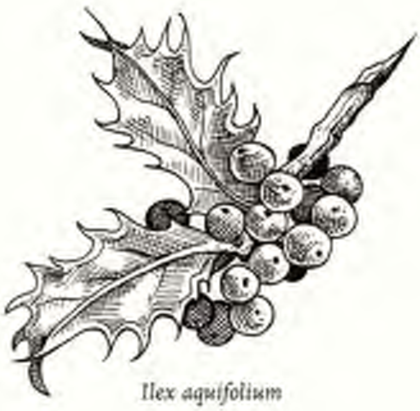
The Spirit-Retinue of High John the Conqueror

Benefaction, Deftness, Impunity, Legerdemain, Craftiness, Beguilement, Spate, Richness, Extruded Force, Greased Palms, Virile Outpourings, Phallic Prowess, and Gilded Speech.

HOLLY

Ilex aquifolium; Ilex spp.
Aquifoliaceæ (Holly Family)

THE Holly is a slow-growing, dioecious evergreen tree reaching a maximum height of 15 meters, with silver-gray bark and prickled leaves. Blood-red fruits are borne on the female trees and



Ilex aquifolium

embody its characteristic Yuletide appearance. It is native to Europe and northwestern Asia, with isolated populations in coastal North Africa. The wood of the tree is hard and workable, and used for fashioning small items such as cups, tool handles and sculpture. Native Holly forests, owing to the bark color and the curious filtration of light afforded by its branches, generate a peculiar luminescent ambience, characterized by some as gloomy, and fully in accord with the characteristics of Saturn, one of its governing planets. It played an important totemic role of vigor and good fellowship in the ancient Roman rites of Saturnalia.

There are about 400 accepted species of *Ilex*, or True Hollies. Certain representatives such as Kāwaʻu (*Ilex anomala*) a Holly species endemic to Hawai'i, are known for their hard, durable woods. Others, like the Yaupon Holly (*Ilex vomitoria*) are prized by indigenous peoples as ceremonial plants for their significant content of caffeine and other xanthines to purge body and spirit.

Its medicinal potencies are diaphoretic, febrifuge, emetic, cathartic, diuretic and vasodilative. Internal use of the berries is generally avoided and can provoke disaster if misused. Characterization of the toxicity of the plant in humans is complex, the bitter glycoside Ilicin plays a powerful role.

In planetary resonance, the tree is governed by both by Saturn and by Mars, and from this amalgam of powers we may reflect on several aspects of its character. Firstly, it is tenacious, both as an organism and as a spirit; secondly, it is accorded a vengeful, wrathful spirit. Like many trees such as Fig and Elder, folklore relates that the spirit of the Holly tree is believed to speedily hunt down and torment—or even kill—those who fell them. For gathering leaves, it is best to harvest during dry weather, at mid-day; it is especially important to gather Holly during the hours of Mars.

In magical operations, it is esteemed for its occult powers as a House Ward, for Coercion, and for protection from many maladies including maleficia, poison, evil spirits, and poisonous animals. Numerous traditions associate the tree with control over animals, particularly staves dedicated to that purpose. Old Anglo-Saxon traditions of healing magic prescribed passing sick children through splits in Holly trunks; and Holly infusions may be used to asperge newborn and protect infants.

The Spirit-Retinue of Holly

Catharsis, Detestation, Bloodletting, Stirring, Impalement, Captivity, Harassment, Precaution, Apprehension, Bestial Compulsions, Noxious Legions, Infernal Hierarchy, & Shadowed Brume.

It has a long and venerable reputation as a warden or protector of the domicile. In modern times, this is carried over as a tradition of landscaping, placing Holly near the approaches to the home. In former times, however, branches of the tree, or its flowers, were hung as protective talismans for the same purpose. Holly leaves hung on the inside of the front door was an old North Carolinian charm to avert baneful sorcery and prevent malefactors from crossing the threshold. Holly trees planted outside farmhouse doors were wards against lightning and protection from bewitchment. Wands made of Holly wood were considered especially powerful for revealing the locations of hidden treasure.

Girls wishing to dream of their future lovers worked the following Holly-charm: nine fresh leaves were tied into a three-cornered handkerchief with nine knots, and the resulting pouch laid on the pillow before going to sleep; a vigil of complete silence until the dawn broke was also required.

In North America, the caffeine-rich Yaupon was employed as the primary plant in the powerful Black Drink, a stimulating beverage with both sacramental and social uses. The decoction was made by parching the leaves and twigs, and then boiling them in water until a dark-colored decoction resulted. The brew was then served in ritual bowls, shell-cups, or drinking-gourds. Magical use of the drink varied by tribe, but the most complete information comes to us from the Creek Confederacy. The brew was consumed most often for ritual purity, with some southeastern tribes actually referring to the drink as 'White Drink', because of the state of ritual immaculation attained by imbibing. Among the Coastal Carolina tribes, there was a folktale in which the use of the Holly to prepare the Black Drink was revealed in dream by the tree's spirit to an ailing man, who, upon waking, prepared and drunk the tea and was cured. Despite this particular Tree's taxonomical namesake, it appears that reports of prolonged emesis from drinking the Black Drink were exagerrated and may have been conflated with other dark sacramental teas made from known emetic plants such as the Button Snakeroot. Ceremonial emetics, such as the Big Gathered Medicine of the Seminole, contained a number of plants, but *Ilex vomitoria* was not among them.

Ilex guayusa, a Holly species from Ecuador, is used magically by the Jibaro and Canelos peoples as an aid in hunting, and to incept oneirogenesis. It is closely related to Yerba Maté (*Ilex paraguayensis*). The leaves contain principles of such pharmacological renown as caffeine, theobromine, theophylline, and chlorogenic acid. A burial of a medicine man dating to 500 CE was discovered in Bolivia, and he was found buried with magical paraphernalia including leaves of I. *guayusa*. This same Holly is also documented as a ceremonial fumigant in norther Argentina.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: House-Ward, Protection, Warfare.
Element: Fire.
Planet: Saturn and Mars.
Deific Forms: Taranis, Habondia, Lugh.
Virtue: Repulsion.
Body Part: Blood.
Therapeutic: Humility.
Affliction: Vanity.
Eponymous Compounds: Ilicin.
Emblem: A human heart impaled by a thorny spear, standing over a chalice holding a leaf.

HONEYSUCKLE

Lonicera spp.
Caprifoliaceæ (Honeysuckle Family)

WOODBINE, as Honeysuckle is also known, is a climbing perennial vine to 5 meters in height, with drooping yellow flowers and mildly toxic—though occasionally edible—berries. Some but not all Honeysuckle species have fragrant blossoms; those that do exhibit subtle differences in odor. A common landscape and hedge plant, at one time it bore the general name Caprifoly. The parts of the plant usually used are the blossoms, berries and grated bark.

On the human body its actions are cardiac, anti-rheumatic, and hepatic. In folk curing, Honeysuckle has been used to treat skin eruptions, bronchial infections, coughs, and glandular abberations. In infusion, use one part grated bark to seven parts water. Juice from the crushed berries was an old topical cure for swellings and inflammations. Some species, such as *Lonicera nigra*, Black Honeysuckle and *Lonicera xylosteum* (Fly Honeysuckle) are of venomous character and can cause poisoning. Pliny referred to it as *Clymenus*, noting its strong aroma, but cautioned against its tendency to weaken male potency. In North America, a number of indigenous California tribes employed the stems of *Lonicera* species as pipestems and other smoking implements.

Honeysuckle is aligned with the esoteric retinue of Mercury, and its occult properties, as used in charm and ritual, are love, healing, and binding. It is also utilized in magical practices to attain mental clarity, and the strengthen the will. The pliable, newly cut stems are used for spells of constraint, much in the manner of twine.

Curing traditions of Northern Peru use the Honeysuckle known as Madre Selva (*L. japonica*) in preparations for healing lovesickness, despression and spiritual malady. A Scottish charm from Moray used against fever was comprised of a wreath of Woodbine cut during a waxing March moon. The wreath was then saved until March of the following year, at which time afflicted children were passed three times through.

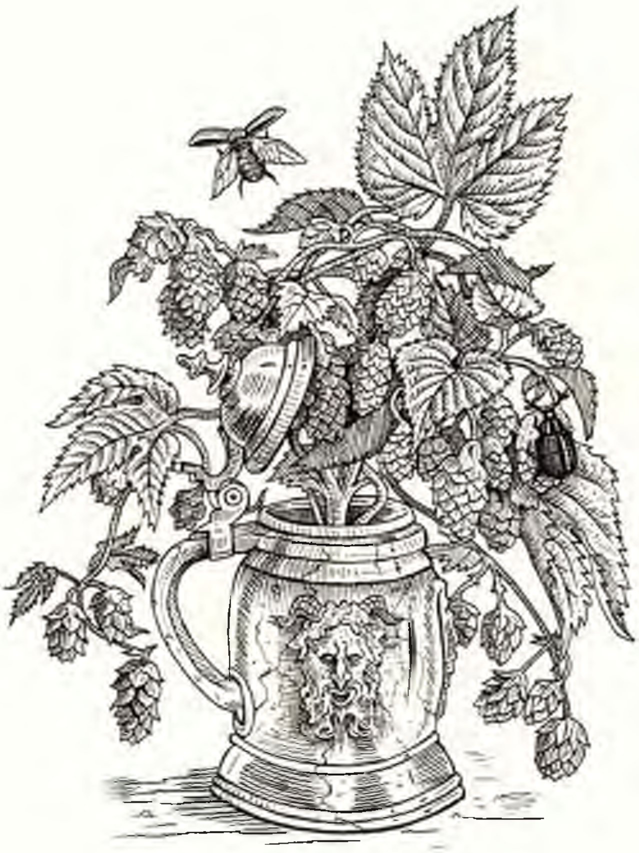
Despite the plant's alignment with healing power, there is a pervasive folk tradition that one should avoid bringing the flowers of Honeysuckle into the home, as they will bring calamity with them.

Hops

Humulus lupulus

Cannabaceæ (Cannabis Family)

An herbaceous perennial bine, Hops has a unique, strobile-like inflorescence, possessing a flavor and aroma of delectable, spicy bitterness. The golden powder dusting the strobile-like fruit is the principal source of the bittering virtue. Hops were officially introduced into English ales in 1524, a convention whose adoption provoked the English gardener John Evelyn to write a century later: "the changing of our wholesome ale into beer had doubtless altered our constitutions."



Taken internally, Hops are sedative, tonic, stomachic and galactagogue. A tea of the floral strobiloids, or a well-crafted tincture, may be taken for insomnia. Pillows stuffed with the dried strobiles may be used to promote sleep: the first historic documentation of a hop pillow occurs with King George III, who employed it for insomnia. The herb may also be made into a poultice for painful swellings and tumors. For a sound night's sleep in the case of extreme nervous tension, a bath can be made may be with the fragrant blossoms. Add a few handfuls of the herb to the water, or place in a muslin bag and add to the ablution several minutes before getting in.

Humulus tea is reputed to act as an anaphrodisiac for men, though if such effects occur it is more likely due to a general torpor the plant may sometimes induce. A small amount of highly hopped beer, essentially being a concentrated Tincture of Humulus, can serve as an effective stomachic. According to Rabbinical tradition, the Jews captive in ancient Babylon remained impervious to leprosy by drinking the potion *Sicerum ex Lupulus Confectam*, or Barley beer embittered with Hops.

The plant is aligned with the planetary dominion of the Sun, and the element of Fire. Its powers as used in magical formulae are Beneficence, Clarivoyance, Charisma, and Protection for Children. For ritual, medicine, or the brewing arts, it is recommended one use only the freshest possible strobiles. These are picked in late summer when ripe, quickly dried and stored in an airtight container. The lupulin in dried hops oxidizes easily, and much of its bitter virtues are diminished. Purveyors of brewery supplies often have on hand freeze-dried hops in sealed pouches which are second in quality to the fresh herb, but still worth the seeking.

The Spirit-Retinue of Hops

Augmentation, Sharpness, Piquancy, Conservancy, Repletion, Requiescence, Listlessness, Faineance, Amaroidal Effusion, Swooning Hebetude, Pungent Effluvia, Bracing Savor, and Floral Reverie.

Horehound, White

Marrubium vulgare

Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

A many-branched herb growing to 1 meter in height and having oval, wrinkled, dentate leaves, with whorls of minute white flowers. The signature leaves are woolly, pale green to gray, and give forth fragrance together with the flowers. The prickly pods contain seeds which can be eaten as a forage food. Growing clumped in arid places, waste ground, and ruins, Horehound is a Native of Europe and Asia Minor, but has naturalized far beyond. In North America it is found as a garden plant, and frequently in the wild.

Horehound is traditionally harvested at Midsummer, taking only upper third of flowering branches. Its healing virtues are expectorant, anti-rheumatic, diaphoretic, emmenagogue, vermifuge, uterine stimulant, diuretic, and laxative. In the form of a concentrated syrup of the leaves, it was prescribed for treating coughs, colds, and athsma, as well as being used externally, usually as a wash or strong decoction, to address skin afflictions. In ancient Egypt, the plant was used as a mithridate; the Greeks also reckoned it a strong counterpoison and used it as a vermifuge. In modern folk medicine, it is also valued against liver complaints and urinary infections.

In herbal planetary correspondence, it is aligned with the virtues of Mercury; its occult powers are Allure, Protection from Maleficia, Protection from Poison, Ward Against Fascination, and Protection for Children.

From ancient times it has had strong associations with the powers of fertility and has also been used as a love charm. At Passover, Horehound is one of the bitter herbs used in the Jewish *seder*. Smoldered as an incense together with Tansy, it was used in Polish herb magic to drive away 'night demons' from children. In Peruvian folk-magic a wash of the plant, together with the plant parts, is used on the body to prevent fright, and to dispell negative influences. Though an adopted plant in Native American pharmacopoeias, White Horehound is one of the plants used in the ritual liniment for the Female Shooting Life Chant, a Navajo ceremony.

HORSETAIL

Equisetum spp.
Equisetaceæ (Horsetail Family)

KNOWN also as Shave Brush, Horsetail is an herb of damp marshes and saturated substrates, and is of a primordial botanical lineage, being flowerless, and one of the few terrestrial plants to metabolize the element Silicon. Growing to a height of 30 cm, it is deep green throughout, presenting a twiggy bottle-brush like appearance, its lateral stems situated in whorls around the central leader. *Equisetum* is the sole remaining genus of the ancient botanical class Equisetopsida, a vast group of plants which once dominated the Paleozoic and boasted tall semi-arboreal species. The genus is comprised of 15 species, most of which are endemic to the northern hemisphere.

An herb of Saturn, folk medicine has utilized it as a diuretic, antihemmoragic, hepatic, and renal tonic as well as to treat certain maledictions of the prostate. It is also used as a poultice for speeding recovery of ulcers, both internally and externally. The silica content of the herb is considered useful for healing the connective tissue, and strengthens hair and nails; because of this mineral content, the plant has also been used as a natural abrasive for cleaning and polishing objects. For most species, the herb is harvested and dried in June, collecting only the upper part of the stems.

Some species such as *Equisetum sylvaticum* are considerably poisonous. In Native American magic, the Lacandon brewed an aphrodisiac philtre from fresh segments of *Equisetum myriochatum*.

HOUSELEEK

Sempervivum tectorum
Crassulaceæ (Crassula Family)

A SUCCULENT of the Crassula family related to that herb known as Hens and Chicks. The parts used are the leaves, or the entire plant, whose leaves are arrayed in a beguiling mandala-like rosette. Houseleek is native to Southern Europe, but due to its beloved status among gardeners, is widely distributed.

Its therapeutic properties as exploited by folk medicine are astringent, diuretic, emetic, and purgative. Houseleek juice may be employed in the form of a poultice to burns and scrapes; taken internally in significant doses, it induces vomiting. These selfsame precious juices are also esteeemed as a destroyer of such blights as ringworm and warts; corns have also been expunged thereby. In folk medicine, a common remedy used a single split leaf rubbed onto warts as a charm for their destruction. It was an ancient tonic, extolled for annealing male virility.

> The juice of it is cooling and astringent and therefore of use in Burns, in inflammations of the Eyes and cancerous Ulcers, it very soon removes the Anguish occasioned by the Sting of a Bee.
>
> GEORGE CHARLES DEERING
> *Catalogus Stirpium*, 1738

Houseleek is aligned with Jupiter due to that god's governance of lightning, but also, in some measure, to the dominion of Venus. Its magical properties are Love, Allure, Protection Against Maleficia, and Protection from Fire. It is also known as an efficacious House Ward, especially against the evils of witchcraft. Houseleek is a valuable ally in weather magic, and it has long been associated with other gods of thunder, such as Thor.

Many years ago, Houseleek was often grown in the cracks on the roofs of thatched homes. When fostered in such a manner, it was believed the spirit of the plant would repay the homeowner by magically ensuring a steady supply of money. Given the destruction wrought by a fire on a thatch roof, as well as insurance premiums for houses with them, there is a basis in reality to this lore.

Saint Hildegard of Bingen accounted it a lust-producing plant, and an ally of men, and heartily recommended it taken with goat's milk to strengthen the semen. This usage accords with its reputation among the ancient Romans as a plant used for attracting love.

HYSSOP

Hyssopus officinalis

Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

HYSSOP is a shrubby perennial of warm climes with fragrant, lanceolate leaves, reaching a height of about 1.5 meters. The flowers are pale to dark blue, though many subspecies and cultivated varieties offer intriguing color deviations, having white, pink, or purple blooms. It exhibits many of the noble qualities of the Woody Lamiaceae, being at once magical, medicinal, ornamental and aromatic. Hyssopus is a small genus, with seven accepted species.

Leaves and blossoms are the portions utilized for power. These aerial portions may be dried and hung in the same manner as Lavender; this is a basic talisman for the Evil Eye. A fragrant but potentially toxic essential oil is extracted from the flowering tops. The best variety for aromatic and medicinal use is *Hyssopus officinalis* var. *decumbens*, being well-balanced in virtues, and generally less toxic than the wild species. Hyssop is used for flavoring cordials and traditional liqueurs such as Chartreuse, as well as sachets and potpourri. Judiciously used, it is a fine addition to absinthe formulations, serving a unitive function of harmonizing diverse aromatics.

The herb radiates varied actions upon the human body, including such actions as antibacterial, stimulating expectorant, diaphoretic, carminative, astringent, antispasmodic, sedative, nervine, and digestive. Its chief benefits are in addressing respiratory disorders and complaints of the gut. A poultice has also been used to treat external wounds, swollen joints, and bruises. Essential oil should be avoided by epileptics, pregnant women, and those with chronic hypertension.

Hyssop partakes of the planetary foison of both the Moon and Jupiter; its powers in the magical art are primarily those of Purification, Clarivoyance, Benediction, Exorcism, Triumph, and Wealth. The original Hebrew 'Hyssop' valued for ritual blood-asperging was called *Esob*. The identity of this plant is not certain. It may be Caper, *Capparis spinosa*, but other plants have also been suggested by historians and botanists, such as an unidentified species of *Origanum*.

In Europe, Hyssop was used, in times of plague, along with Juniper, for strewing and combatting vapors of affliction. The plant has a long history of being used to consecrate spaces and persons prior to magical workings. An old recipe for Hyssop Water, used for purification of the Sorcerer prior to the Work, is compounded thus: "A bunch of vervain, fennel, lavender, sage, valerian, mint, garden basil, rosemary, and hyssop gathered in the day and hour of Mercury, bound together with a thread, spun by a young maiden, when dipped in water and sprinkled, will chase away all phantoms that shall hinder or annoy."

Bundles of Hyssop, Asparagus, and Ground Thistle are still used by Greek peasants as wards against the *kallikantzaroi*. Ærial portions of Hyssop may be made into a strong decoction, used as a purifying ritual perfume or bath.

⁂

THE AROMATICK LABYRINTH

IMMERSED in veritable rivers of air, the wanderer of Nature's Herbarium transects many powerful plant currents, each carrying scents from unknown and distant nectaries, awakening the flesh to strange attractions. One is seduced and enchanted, suffused with the exhalation of flower, leaf and root.

And yet there are scents which provoke other, more sinister physiological responses—repulsion, alarm, derangement, melancholy, rage, confusion, and fear. Their action, penetrating the most ancient layers of ancestral memory, translates at once to physical and emotional response, often long before the conscious mind becomes aware. This is the botanical power of fragrance, an enchantment exquisitely perfected by plants.

Serving as a primeval means of animal communication, plant scent has goaded the evolution of the *Insecta* over hundreds of millions of years, to evolve complex relationships with herbs, trees and fungi, gaining the art of selectively identifying myriad volatile compounds. Genes for odor reception constitute one of the largest gene families in the human genome, and recent research has hypothesized that the olfactory sense of an individual human is capable of distinguishing in excess of a trillion odors.

While such theories await full scientific validation, personal experience and observation of the work of colleagues affirm that our senses of smell are far more nuanced than admitted. During my early wilderness peregrinations of the Trinity Alps of Northern California, I was awakened to great expansions of the olfactory sense, such that I could detect certain stands of trees such as Incense Cedar (*Calocedrus decurrens*) from far off, or perceive a distant snowmelt lake, based purely on the aromatic complexities of the air current.

Religion, magic and sorcery have long made use of plant scent, primarily those evoking a sense of majesty, mystery, and pleasure. Frankincense, Myrrh and Rose are characteristic, their odors magnified through the media of incense, and balsams. The earliest ritual usages of scents are most likely connected with death and the decomposition of the corpse, and also as perfumed offerings for divinities. In the case of Frankincense and some of its burseraceous relatives, the aromas of the smoldering resin conjure not only a sense of expansion and celestial grandeur, but also induce a state of trance when inhaled in sufficient quantities.

The distinctive odor of Rose, for example, arises from a complex latticework of fragrant compounds including Geraniol, Nerol, b-damascenone, Ionone, Citronellol, Citronellyl acetate, 2-phenyl ethanol, and Cis-rose oxide; the varying proportions of these compounds yield aromatic idiosyncrasy from one rose variety to another. Complexity of plant aromatics is also affected by the maturity of the plant in its life cycle, as well as external factors such as the time of day, temperature and humidity. The interaction with the human olfactory sensorium, and the mystical experiences thus arising, are a labyrinthine formula arising not merely from the individual fragrant compounds, but the metabolic particulars of the world of chlorophyll and the world of flesh and bone. Nonetheless, a plant's aromatic soul is composed of a great many singular fragrant compounds, each of which, to the esoteric botanist, may be considered a sentient *daimon* in itself.

ANETHOLE · $C_{10}H_{12}O$

A major terpenoid contributor to the aroma and flavor of Anise and Fennel, the aromatic compound Anethole indwells those herbs, as well as Star Anise (*Illicium verum*) and Guarana (*Paullinia cupana*). Its principles are implicated in regulation of female hormones, speficially with regard to uterine stimulation and as a galactagogue. In addition to its aromatic properties Anethole exhibits strong antimicrobial powers.

ATLANTONE · $C_{15}H_{22}O$

Atlantone is a sesquiterpenoid more specifically known as d-alpha-atlantone. It contributes sweet and woody components of the rich fragrance of Atlas Cedar Oil, and evokes such Jovian virtues as royalty, richness, splendor, and homeostasis, the healing unification of the corporeal systems. In addition to its presence in True Cedars, it is also found in the roots of certain aromatic herbs such as Angelica.

BENZOIC ACID · $C_7H_6O_2$

Derived from Gum Benzoin, from which it takes its name, it produces a muted balsamic odor and is also naturally found in the ripe fruits of Cranberry, Blueberry, Huckleberry, and other *Vaccinicum* species. The presence of Benzoic acid is significant in wines made from such fruits, and also Rowan (*Sorbus acuparia*). Distillation of Benzoic acid was known to Nostradamus.

CARVACROL · $C_{10}H_{14}O$

A monoterpenoid with a strong, warming aroma that is at once 'green' and 'medicinal,' reminiscent of Garrigue herbs. Notable plant species in which Carvacrol is present include Thyme, Oregano, Savory, Pepperwort, Monarda and Dittany of Crete. In oncological research it has been a study subject regarding a role in cancer cell death, as well as antibacterial action against certain species of *Staphylococcus*. In the occult arena, its function correlates with magical actions of banishing and exorcism, but also fortification, or protection against demonic entity. Its noted correlation with the sensation of warmth allies it to Elemental Fire, particularly its purging and sustaining qualities.

CEDROL · $C_{15}H_{26}O$

Cedrol is a tricyclic sesquiterpenol giving forth a faint woody scent, Cedrol is found in False Cedars such as Texas Cedar (*Juniperus mexicana*) as well as True Cedars (*Cedrus* spp.). In perfumery it serves as a base note and fixative. Biochemical research has suggested that, as an aromatic, Cedrol has a mild sedative effect when inhaled.

CINNAMIC ACID · $C_9H_8O_2$

Cinnamic acid is one of the basic components of the category of compounds referred to as balsams, and proffers a subtle honey-like odor. Obtained from oil of cinnamon, it is also found in Balsam of Tolu, Balsam or Peru, Storax, and Balsam Poplar, as well as other 'balsamic' botanicals. Enzymic decarboxylation of Cinnamic acids in wine contributes to carnation-like phenol character.

CITRAL · $C_{10}H_{16}O$

Effusing a strong lemon-citrus scent, Citral is prized in perfumery as bright, fresh and uplifting note. Its distribution in the plant realm is widespread, with the main plant sources for its extraction being various *Cymbopogon* species including lemongrass (*C. citratus*), Lemon Balm, Lemon Myrtle (*Backhousia citriodora*), as well as Lemon and Lime.

Estragole · $C_{10}H_{12}O$

Also known as methyl chavicol, estragole produces a penetrating herbaceous scent and is found in in such plants as Tarragon, Fennel and Basil as well as genera of the Myrtle Family including *Syzygium*. When ingested, it has been linked to the induction of euphoria. When isolated as a compound, it is a suspected carcinogen, an attribute it shares with other aromatic compounds such as Cedrol.

Eucalyptol · $C_{10}H_{18}O$

In small amounts, Eucalyptol provides a pleasing mint-like fragrance and flavor, and is obtained by the distillation of Eucalyptus leaves in species especially rich in the compound. Like Estragole, it is toxic at high doses. It is also found in Wormwood, *Leptospermum*, Rosemary and various Sages.

Eugenol · $C_{10}H_{12}O_2$

Eugenol is known principally from the spice Clove (*Syzygium aromaticum*) and its products such as clove cigarettes and cigars. It radiates a warming, spicy and balsamic aroma and is the major contributor to the compound fragrance of its botanical source. It is a prime constituent of Oil of Cloves, being at least 75%, and is a known hepatotoxic. Other plant sources of Eugenol include Cinnamon, Nutmeg, Bay, and Geranium.

Fenchone · $C_{10}H_{16}O$

A monoterpene present in Fennel, Rosemary and Lavender, it resembles camphor in odor and structure, and appears as a colorless compound, though providing a distinct aromatic stratum in plants where it occurs. Its presence in such plants as *Artemisia* spp. correlates loosely with bitterness, and its absence sweetness. In occult aromatics, its fragrance lends power to works of mental clarity, and to cleansing.

Geraniol · $C_{10}H_{18}O$

Intensely floral, effusive and religious, it is a primary aromatic building block of the scent of Rose, but it is found in many other odorous plants, including Citrus, Cymbopogon, Thyme and of course its namesake Geranium (and the great tribe of Pelargoniums); it is even found in aged Tobacco. In small quantities, it contributes to the magical virtue of Allure; in larger amounts it may repel or cause nausea. This duality of attraction and repulsion is reflected in Geraniol's ability to serve as a repellant for insect pests, yet it may also attract—and even be produced by—bees. Commercially Geraniol is used as both a scent and a flavoring; it is often extracted from a-pinene and b-pinene, two essential components of turpentine.

Ionone · $C_{13}H_{20}O$

Ionones are a group of compounds best known for their presence in Roses, and more importantly, of Violets, whose distinctive odor emanates from the combination of a-ionone and β-ionone. Besides their signature violet scent and flavor, additional scent characteristics of Ionones are woody, lightly balsamic, floral, and notes of Orris and Cassis. Ionones bear a close relationship with carotenoids such as vitamin A, from which they arise though degradation, sometimes metabolic. The Ardbeg distillery in Islay, Scotland noted a pronounced increase in ionones in Scotch whisky samples aged in the zero-gravity conditions of space aboard the International Space Station: the increase in ionones is not well understood but thought to arise from the interaction of cosmic rays on organic molecules within the distillate.

Jasmone · $C_{11}H_{16}O$

Oil of Jasmine contains over 100 chemical constituents, many of them aromatic; notable among these is Jasmone. Floral, fruity and spicy, it is also known as *cis-jasmone*, and together with Methyl jasmonate ($C_{13}H_{20}O_3$) produces the classic 'heady' and perfume-like smell of jasmine and tuberose, evocative of dense, flowering tropical gardens. In plants, it is produced by metabolism of Jasmonic acid ($C_{12}H_{18}O_3$), and can serve as both an insect attractant and repellant. In occult perfumery, it is allied with the states of glamour and allure, being the exteriorized masks of desire and, sometimes, entrapment.

Limonene · $C_{10}H_{16}$

The D-isomer possesses a strong smell of oranges and is sourced from citrus rind, though it is also found in such herbs as Pelargonium, Eucalyptus and Cannabis. The l-isomer by contrast provides a strong solvent-like odor, redolent of pine distillates. Both are vigorously sharp and penetrating notes, and serve to awaken and refresh.

Linalool · $C_{10}H_{18}O$

Linalool possesses the twin enantiomeric forms (*S*)-(+)-linalool, producing a sweet and floral odor, and (*R*)-(-)-linalool, producing a more woody or balsamic odor. Both forms are widespread among diverse botanical genera, arboreal and herbaceous. It is a distinctive component of Clary Sage, Coriander, Cannabis and Basil, among myriad others. Linalool may contribute to Lily of the Valley-like notes in wine, and its kindred compound Linalyl acetate may similarly produce the flavor of Lavender.

Muscone · $C_{16}H_{30}O_2$

Muscone gives the odor of musk to animal spoor; it has also long been valued in perfumery as a base note, as well as some occult applications. Its general aromatic characteristics are earthiness, spice, and a slight fusty rancidity; generally it is esoterically aligned with magical operations of Attraction and the work of aphrodisiacs, as proceeding naturally from its biological origin. Because it must be extracted from endangered fauna, principally species of Musk Deer, resulting in the animal's death, most modern musks are synthetic. Ambrettolide, derived from the seed of Ambrette or Musk Seed (*Abelmoschus moschatus*), is another source, though its musk exhibits a distinctly 'botanical' character.

Myrcene · $C_{10}H_{16}$

Myrcene is a monoterpene with a sharp, spicy odor evoking nostalgias of wood, spice and mint. Well-known plants containing Myrcene include Laurel, Cannabis, Thyme, Parsley, Hops, Ylang Ylang, Mango and Lavender. This is but a small sampling; plants and trees from the eponymous Myrtle Family (Myrtaceæ) are especially represented. Its scent is arousing, reviving, slightly irritating and suggestive of danger; it is thereby allied with the ingenium of the untamed wilderness, anthropomorphized in medieval Europe as 'Wild Men' and 'Wild Women'—the leaf-clad preservers of pre-civilization wisdom.

Nerol · $C_{10}H_{18}O$

Originally isolated from Neroli, it is also found in Cymbopogon and oils of Citrus as well as Roses and Hops. It imparts an aroma which is characterized as floral and sweet, but also the signature of 'freshness,' particularly discernible in Roses. Nerol and its acetate ester Neryl acetate ($C_{12}H_{20}O_2$) are primary components in the complex and haunting fragrance of Immortelle (*Helichrysum italicum*). In occult botany it corresponds with such virtues as youth, beauty, and vigor, and striving for the 'Great Work'.

a-Pinene · $C_{10}H_{16}$ · b-Pinene

Plentiful in conifers, especially their resin, it is one of the most widespread aromatic compounds in fragrant herbs as well, occurring in such plants as Rosemary, Savory, Cannabis, and thousands of others. Its sharp, 'green' and resinous odor is distinctive and promotes clarity of mind and alertness. As a scent, it is best experienced by crushing fresh leaves or coniferous needles; for Christian peoples who observe the pagan custom of the Christmas Tree at Yuletide, Pinene aromatics will be linked to deep nostalgia of the winter holidays, as the house is perfumed by a freshly cut and decorated conifer. As a flavor, Pinene is exalted in Gin, arising from berries of Juniper, or in Retsina, the famed Greek wine which by tradition incorporates the resin of the Aleppo Pine. One can also experience it by eating the fruit of Mango, which due to the presence of pinenes carries a peppery, resinous flavor.

Vanillin · $C_8H_8O_3$

Sweet, balsamic, and slightly unctuous, Vanillin is the prime aromatic constituent of Vanilla pod extract and, and may be considered a fragrance monad. Its capability for blending well with—and potentiating the richness of—other aromatics has long been known and thus it is highly valued in both perfumery and cuisine. The Chocolate of commerce owes much of its distinctive flavor to Vanillin. Esoterically it is linked with promiscuity, pleasure, and arousal.

VERBENONE · $C_{10}H_{14}$

Characterized by an 'herbal', woody, and balsamic fragrance, Verbenone is mainly found in Vervain (*Verbena officinalis*) and Rosemary. Its esoteric contribution to botanical fragrance, as partaken by human olfaction, is principally that of comfort and a perceived state of freshness and purity. Due to its dual function as an insect pheromone, it has also been used to control various tree-ravaging pest species, notably the Southern Pine Beetle (*Dendroctonus frontalis*) and the Mountain Pine Beetle (*Dendroctonus ponderosae*). It may therefore be understood to have a richly pronounced shadow correspondence which is both deceptive and murderous, a principle as much allied with attraction in Nature as in Art.

A-VETIVONE · $C_{15}H_{22}O$ · B-VETIVONE

Both alpha- and beta-Vetivone are defining components of Vetiver Oil, obtained by steam distillation of the roots of Vetiver (*Chrysopogon zizanoides*). The oil's aromatic characteristics are earthy, woody, floral and smoky.

INDIAN PAINTBRUSH

Castilleja spp.
Scrophulariaceæ (Figwort Family)

NATIVE to North America, Indian Paintbrush is a hemiparasitic biennial populating plains and sandy soil, its roots removing part of its required nutrients from adjacent hosts, such as prairie grasses. Best known for its red-flowered species, but the flowers may be yellow, orange, or white. Plants in the genus are variable in size from 20 cm to 1 meter in height. With dedication, some species are adaptable to gardens, particularly if they are wildflower beds on naturally drained native meadow. The plant also bears the folk names Bloody Warrior, Prairie Fire, Snake's Friend, and Snake's Matches.

Its traditional magical powers are Love, Allure, and Healing. In planetary correspondence it is allied with Venus, and with the darker aspects of the Moon, exercising sexual magnetism and psychic manipulation in simulteneity. As it derives its sustenance in part through draining various external hosts, it is a botanical love-charm allied with such parasitic plant groups such as the Dodders (*Cuscuta* spp.), and the nuances of its biology should be contemplated as part of its use in love magic.

Traditional North American lore relates that the Rattlesnake distills her poison from the Indian Paintbrush. Native American groups such as the Menomini have employed the flower in love charms. Among some tribes, a decoction of the roots, taken judiciously on a regular basis, was said to cure venereal diseases.

INDIGO

Indigofera tinctoria
Fabaceæ (Pea Family)

THE plant source of the enthralling azure dye is a fast-growing leguminous shrub native to Africa, but now cultivated in lands worldwide. It is perennial but behaves as an annual in colder climates outside its native range. Dioecious, the leaves are pale green, odd-pinnate, with pink or violet flowers, and characteristic fabaceous pods. It grows to 2 meters in height. *Indigofera* is a large genus, containing about 665 separate species, with a natural range inclusive of the tropics and subtropics worldwide. Though widely distributed, Indigo species diversity is particularly rich in Africa, where religious and occult traditions surrounding the plant are also in abundance. Indigo has been used as a dye plant by humans for four millennia. In Arabic, it is referred to generally as Nil, but other traditional names are used for the plant, including Khitr, Walaq-al-Nilaj, Udhlim, and Wasma, which refers to the leaves. Spanish Arabs knew it by the name *el-Henna al-Majnoun*: 'Henna invaded by the Jinns'.

Anthocyanins, being botanically derived pigments, are responsible for the plant's signature blue color. Human traditions of dye extraction are thought to be ancient and are attended by both taboo and ritual. Traditionally, the deep blue dye is produced by controlled fermentation of the plant, in combination with other unique botanical catalysts. Dye extraction is laborious, and attended by complex taboo, as noted by Richardson and Richardson (2015). Traditional dyers are typically women, and usually post-menopausal. In diverse indigo-dyeing traditions, the extraction process is acknowledged to be vulnerable to attacks by evil spirits, thus a number of rites are engaged to protect the plants, dye-pots and dyers from their interference. Threats to pregnant women are especially dire and the attendant spirits may induce spontaneous abortion.

> May Indigo come to you.
> *Egyptian Curse*

In its usage as a prepared color, both for dye and ornamentation, Indigo receives the Venusian planetary saturation, albeit one of dark majesty. Where it functions in the realms of malevolence, whether used for protection from demonic attack or for rituals concerning the dead, its Venusian aspect receives the strong tint of Saturn. As a whole, when considering its planetary correspondence, both of these powers as manifest through the herb should be considered conjunct.

In operations of magic, the plant, as well as its concentrated preparations, are used against demonic entities and malefic magic. The Bedouin use the plant to protect babies from evil spirits by smearing their eyelids with an Indigo paste. The *tagelmust*, or Indigo-dyed raiments of the Tuareg Berber peoples of the Sahara, serves as protection from evil spirits and generally conveys power to the wearer, often staining the skin blue as well.

Like certain herbal prophylaxes against vampires and earthbound spirits, there are traditional magical uses of Indigo connected with human death and used for restraining the shades of the restless dead. In Indonesia, a pot of wild Indigo is poured over the grave of those who have suffered a bad death, the mixture transfixing the spirit of the deceased and preventing it from wandering. As a talisman against insanity, wood pieces of *Indigofera linifolia* are worn around the neck in eastern India.

In modern Egypt, Indigo is an accurst plant, and is worn on the faces and hands of mourning women.

IPECAC

Carapichea ipecacuanha
Rubiaceæ (Madder Family)

IPEGA’KWĀI, or ‘roadside sick-making plant’ is a shrubby native of Brazil, growing to 1 meter in height, with a creeping habit, growing in moist and shaded locations. The leaves are ovate and the small berry-like fruits are red or dark violet. It has many common names, among them South American Vomiting Root.

The plant’s medicinal and magical power is concentrated in the root, from which are extracted the alkaloids emetine ($C_{29}H_{40}N_2O_4$), named for its drastic cathartic action, together with the associated alkaloids cephaeline ($C_{28}H_{38}N_2O_4$) and pychotrine. Ipecac was imported into Europe from the 17th century onward for the production of Syrups of Ipecac, which had stronger emetic action than other established purgatives such as Scammony (*Convoluvulus scammonia*) and Jalap (*Ipomœa jalapa*). Together with Opium and Potassium sulfate, it formed the basis of the valued patent medicine known as Dover’s Powder.

It is aligned with the planetary influences of both Mars and Saturn, and its magical powers are Exorcism and Warfare. As a nauseant and gastric provocateur, its bitter, vomitous taste serves as a mnemonic in the Doctrine of Signatures, which suggests the use of the plant for the forthright purging of the epigastrium.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF IPECAC

Expungement, Reagency, Puissance, Conquering,
Triumphalism, Uprootedness, Exigent Crises,
Desperate Measures, Swift Rejoinders,
Drastic Intervention, Percussive
Ejection, and Violent
Restoration.

IPOMŒA

A LARGE genus of between 500 and 600 species in the Bindweed Family, or Convolvulaceae. *Ipomoea* is often referred to by its common name, the Morning Glories. Of this extraordinary assembly of plants, 430 species are found in the New World, and many contain poisons. The whole of the genus is morphologically characterized by a creeping habitus, heart-shaped or palmately-lobed leaves, climbing tendrils, and the characteristic sympetalous or 'trumpet-shaped' flowers. *Ipomoea* is economically important for food production, containing edible tubers such as Sweet Potato (*I. batatas*), but also due to its inclusion of certain agricultural pest species, banned under the label 'noxious weeds'. The genus contains many plants of magical and medicinal significance, such as High John the Conqueror (*I. jalapa*) and Beach Moonflower (*I. violacea*), which has been used for inducing visionary states, due to the presence of ergoline alkaloids.

IRIS

Iris spp.
Iridaceæ (Iris Family)

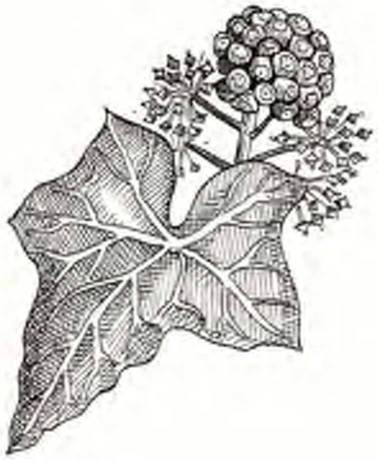
A GENUS of about 300 species, Irises are herbaceous perennials, and are identified by their tall, slender sword-shaped leaves, distinctive flowers, and thick creeping rhizomes which may be easily divided. The plant is common in both temperate and tropical zones and is prized in cultivation for its showy blossoms, but there are also many lesser-known species thriving in the wild. In older systems of plant reckoning, Irises were also commonly known as 'Flags'.

The plant is named for the ancient Greek goddess of the rainbow, she who guided the souls of deceased women to the afterlife. In Ancient Egypt the Iris sometimes adorned the foreheads of sphinx statues. In the Middle East, some white-flowered species are associated with death and the afterlife and are especially planted in Muslim cemeteries.

The flowers and rhizomes are the portions most utilized, the latter expressing emetic and antimicrobial action in the human body. The 12th-century treatise on Arabic medicine *The Dispensatory of Ibn-at-Tilmīd* provides a complex formula for Iris Wine, used as a prescription for lassitude. In American folk magic, use of the wort was common as a poultice for sores, employing the crushed rhizome; it was also used to encourage vomiting. In herbal medicine, a weak decoction of the pulverized root of Stinking Iris (*I. foetidissima*), has been prescribed for migraine headaches; the same plant is also laxative.

In considering its esoteric relation to the wandering stars, the plant is nourished by the dual influences of the Moon and Saturn. This is understood by its preference for water, and low, boggy places, the character of its root, and its concentration of bitter principles. In operations of magic, Iris is used for making effigies, for honoring the dead, and as a house-ward to protect the domicile and its occupants.

As a tributary to the ancient current of Mandrake magic, carved rhizomes of *Iris pseudoacorus* have also been used in 'root-witching' traditions, particularly in Prussia. Similar to the German *alräunchen*, roots were dried and carved into the magical *Gluckwurzel*, many of which had grotesque humanoid shapes and were sold as amulets. In Japan, the Roof Iris (*I. tectorum*) is well known for its power to keep evil spirits away from the home. The Iris known as Orris (*I. florentina*) is much valued in perfumery and in magical usage for its scent.



IVY

Hedera helix; Hedera spp.
Araliaceæ (Ginseng Family)

ENGLISH or European Ivy is a creeping evergreen liana with lobed leaves, often seen to be mantling trees, ruins, crypts and older architectural structures. It is native to Europe, often in Maple forests, but owing to domestication and the breeding of many cultivars, is widespread as a horticulatural plant in landscape plantings. Though few realize it, the 'vine' form of Ivy is the juvenile phase, which is is vegetative in nature. The adult phase, during which the leaf shape chages to become more spade-shaped, is more upright, and geared toward sexual reproduction.

The flowers have little scent, but an abundance of nectar, often the last that the dwindling year has to offer the bees. Older adult Ivies will grow into freestanding trees, which produce a very light, often contorted, but hard wood, suitable for carving rude figures and idols. The genus *Hedera* has 17 accepted species. In the Pacific Northwest of the United States, Ivy is invasive in many forest settings and a routine target of eradication programs.

In Europe during the middle ages, Ivy was considered a therapy for gallstones. The medieval compendium of womens' medicine *Trotula* recommended Ivy leaves cooked in wine as a topical application for cancers. The plant enjoyed a reputation for the treatment of burns, and though poison, Culpeper prescribed the berries against drunkenness. These fruits also yield a brown dye. Juice extracted from the ripe berries is a suitable ingredient in incenses of binding, particularly in the making of pastilles or cones, in substitution for wine of water. In its capacity as a destroyer, whether of trees or masonry, it is formidable, but exceeded by such plants as Virginia Creeper (*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*) and Kudzu (*Pueraria* spp.).

The flesh of the berry contains the toxic a-hederine, a saponin. Symptoms of acute poisoning include burning and blistering of the throat and mouth, coupled with nausea, prolific spewing, diarrhea, cramp, shallowness of breath; slavering, and skin irritation. In rare instances Ivy poisoning has led to coma; some fatalities are reported from children eating the berries. In present-day rural Greece its virtue as an intoxicant is still respected, as is reflected in recently collected folk recipes using crushed leaves soaked in red wine for the duration of a fortnight. Depending on dosage, the brew is regarded as narcotic and hallucinogenic.

The leaves, tendrils and wood are the parts generally used in magic and folk religion, and the plant is aligned with Saturn in planetary correspondence. As used in ritual and sorcery, Ivy encompasses the powers of Binding, Consecration, Triumph, Coersion, Cursing, and Protection from Lightning.

Ivy has ancient repute as a Dionysian herb. *Kissos*, ("ivy"), was an aspect of this god, and the Thyrsus, or wand of Dionysus, was made from a stalk of Fennel woven with Ivy. According to Plutarch, the *enthusiasmos* of the bacchantes resulted from Ivy intoxication. An early council of the Christian church forbade the use of Ivy wreaths because of its heathen associations.

In certain areas of the British Isles, a wreath of Ivy, Blackberry, and Rowan when worn was believed to repel malevolent spirits. The herb may be used in binding spells, being similar in essence to Convolvulus, but dignified with a somber, majestic quality; its wood may also be used for making potent fetishes to absorb or bind. In some old English agricultural traditions, the last sheaf of the harvest was bound with Ivy.

The Spirit-Retinue of Ivy

Wantonness, Incursion, Ligature, Intemperance, Constriction, Soulful Elegy, Somber Beauty, Knotted Restraint, Ravaged Sanity, Dwindling Vitality, Crumbling Artifice, Creeping Irruption, and Ruinous Splendor.

In the Sabbatic Tradition, Ivy is the herb *par excellence* for binding, whether it be for a spirit, fetish, or other ceremonial use. The lengthy stems, stripped of leaves, are well suited for this, being of requisite thickness and surprising strength. Indeed, some etymologies of the generic name *Hedera* suggest its origin in the Celtic *hoedra*, meaning 'cord'.

A complex procedure for divining illnesses using an Ivy leaf appears in *Lupton's Tenth Book of Notable Things*, published in 1660. The distribution and character of spots on Ivy leaves were scrutinized, after having floated in a vessel of water, and from them information about the illness was extracted. Some folk magical traditions employed sacred cups of Ivy wood to cure whooping cough in children. Ivy-dew, collected on the morning of Beltaine and used to wash the face, has the power to grant a wish when so used.

The grimoire *Almadel* specifies that, when conjured to visible appearance, spirits of the North appear as a boy or a small man dressed in black or olive garments and wearing a crown of Ivy berries.

CORRESPONDENCES
Powers: Constraint, Infiltration.
Element: Earth.
Planet: Saturn.

Star: Alphecca (α Coronæ Borealis).
Deific Forms: Dionysos.
Domain: Graveyard, Crypt, Ruins.
Body Part: Sinews.
Therapeutic: Limitation.
Affliction: Trespass.
Eponymous Compounds: α-hederine.
Embodied State: Divine Madness.
Emblem: A carved effigy of a demon, bound head to toe in intricate knots.

The Circle of Green

OF CROWNS, GARLANDS AND CHAPLETS

THE encompassing nature of the Circle is cardinal to its magical function, serving to contain, and therefore describe power. It also delimits and so consecrates an area, separating it from that which lies beyond. The Circle arises as an outward expansion of the Point, entreating every horizon, yet ever referencing the center.

The form of the Circle also makes its appearance as an organizing geometer of plants, from stems to vascular tissue, to stoma, to the rings in the trunk of a tree. It may is also seen in the reproductive organs and in the fruit and seed they beget, as well as in organizational systems such as radial symmetry, and the circular forms of inflorescences such as characterize plants of the Asteraceae, or Sunflower family. These impressions within the body of the plant serve to define its center and periphery, and participate in such concepts as individuation, growth or acquisition, aetheric boundaries, protection, and individual space.

Allied magical concepts are also present in those talismanic plant constructions, used since antiquity, known as chaplets or green crowns. Essentially a wreath or garland woven of plants worn on the head, they conveyed symbolism, power, honor, and benediction on those who wore them.

Traditional wedding chaplets dating from ancient times included sprigs of Myrtle, Orange flowers, boughs of flowering Rosemary, ears of ripened grain, and Roses. Plant crowns were also worn by attendants in sacrificial rites, composed of the leaves of such trees as Cypress, Bay and Pine.

Both Ivy and Smilax (*Smilax aspera*) formed the crowns sacred to Dionysos, and Euripides' *Bacchae* recorded the Theban maenads as crowned with Ivy, Bryony, and Oak. The Greeks also traditions of funerary crowns, later known by the Latinized term *Corona Sepluchralis*.

The Roman tradition of honorary crowns included many composed of plant material. Among the Romans, the *Corona Convivialis* was a close-fitting chaplet worn to prevent intoxication, and used such plants as Violet, Myrtle, and Ivy. The crown known as the *Corona Nuptialis* was worn by brides and was formed of Verbena in flower.

The triumphal crown of ancient Roman tradition or *Corona Triumphalis* was woven of leaves of Bay Laurel (*Laurus nobilis*), sometimes including the berries. The Grass Crown or *Corona Graminea* was the highest military honor: it was woven from wildflowers and grasses uprooted from the field of battle.

The 10th century Byzantine text *Geoponika* mentions a wreath made of Chamaipitys or Ground Pine (*Ajuga chamaipitys*) whose virtues included preserving the wearer from drunkenness. Ajuga is the genus of plants known as Bugles, a member of the mint family known for hardiness and a prostrate growing habit.

A surviving medieval English burial custom from Abbots Ann, Hampshire called 'The Virgin's Crown'. Ceremony is conducted at the funeral for an unmarried person who was born, baptized, confirmed, and died in the Parish of Abbots Ann, and who had an 'umblemished reputation.' The Crown was made of Hazel wood, decorated with paper rosettes, and five white gauntlets, representing a challenge to anyone to call into question the character of the deceased. The Crown is hung in the church for three weeks, and, if unchallenged, remains there bearing the name of the deceased until it decays from age.

The Hawaiian *Lei po'o* is a modern, living example of such a chaplet, being a floral crown which can include such plants as Ti leaf, as well as flowers of Ginger, Plumeria, and Orchid.

JASMINE

Jasminum officinale

Oleaceæ (Olive Family)

RENOWNED for its intoxicating scent, Jasmine is a climbing deciduous vine from central and east Asia, with dark green pinnate leaves and bright white, twilight-blooming flowers. Related species include Arabian Jasmine (*J. sambac*) and Yellow Jasmine (*J. fruticans*). The parts most frequently used are the fresh blossom, its enfleurage, and its absolute. Widespread Asian traditions esteem Jasmine as a Flower of Love.

The scent is sweet, 'floral', unctuous and characterized by its ability to seduce, and ultimately overwhelm consciousness. Though not typically thought of as a 'psychoactive' many perfumers would disagree. As an aromatic it is active in tiny amounts and can easily become demonic, the subject of overindulgence. Its aromatic and non-aromatic chemical fractions are complex, including coumarins, steroids, and alkaloids, among many other compound groups.

A number of other plants have been referred to as Jasmine but bear no relation to it taxonomically or in terms of spiritual essence. The fragrant white flowered False Jasmine or Star Jasmine (*Trachelospermum jasminoides*) is often confused for true Jasmine but is an unrelated member of the Dogbane Family. A species of *Gelsimium*, known as Yellow Jasmine or Yellow Jessamine, is extremely poisonous, containing varied convulsant poisons.

Through classical planetary correspondence, it is aligned with both the Moon and Venus. Its retinue of spiritual powers, as used in magic, are Allure, Love, Clarivoyance, Summoning, Protection from Noxious Spirits, and Harmony. It is associated with marriage, attraction and adornment of the body. In modern perfumery, it is noted for its power of ability to combine and amalgamate diverse odorous principles, achieving a kind of aromatic unity which transcends the individual scents.

Smoke of Jasmine has been used magically in some traditions. In ancient times the seeds were burned for capnomantic auguries, divining omens from the resulting fumes. In Ethiopian herbal traditions, the roots of *Jasminum fluminense* are used as a suffumigant against evil spirits.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUNE OF JASMINE

Rapture, Conjunction, Courtship, Salutation,
Tranquility, Æsthesis, Pleasure, Inducement,
Surrender, Delight, Sexual Display,
Sensorial Usurpation, and
Scented Alcoves.

JERQUITY

Abrus precatorius

Fabaceæ (Pea Family)

THE Rosary Pea is a liana which can reach 6 meters in height on a host tree, trellis, or other support. Its leaves are pinnate and its flowers pink to light purple; it is best known for its hard, bright red seeds which have been used in India for rosaries. The plant has proliferated in tropical areas where it has been introduced, and is common in such places as Brazil, as well as south Florida. It is thought to be native to India, or, more probably, Africa.

The scarlet and black seeds have a sinister reputation as a criminal poison. The toxic Abrin which can be lethal in both humans and animals. Comparisons have been made with certain snake venoms when describing its killing power. In India, the seeds were ground into a paste and reconstituted into a cunningly made synthetic thorn called a *sutari*, which was used to kill cattle by puncturing the skin. Although the seeds have a hard, nearly impenetrable coat, their toxins can leach into water after steeping for a time. In the Sudan, women occasionally use the seeds to render themselves infertile.

In Caribbean nations, bracelets and rosaries are made from the seeds, which are known as jumby-beans, worn to ward off noxious spirits or the Evil Eye. Indeed, the seed's resemblance to an eye has given rise to such folk-names as Crab's

Eyes. In East Africa, the Duruma use the leaves as a suffumigant for making charms of commerce.

In the Islamic magical traditions of India, the root of *Arbus prectatorius* generated lampblack for the creation of a magic mirror to reveal lost property, or the influences of devils. In Egypt, the ground seeds command power against the Evil Eye and are an ingredient in incense. The 3rd century BCE Sanskrit text *Arthasastra* gives a formula using Jerquity seeds, ground together with *Gossypium herbaceum* leaves, seeds of *Jasminum*, *Careya* spp. and *Guilando bunducella*, together with cow dung and certain salts, to create a fumigation which causes blindness to one's enemies.

JESSAMINE

Gelsemium sempervirens

Gelsimiaceae (Jessamine Family)

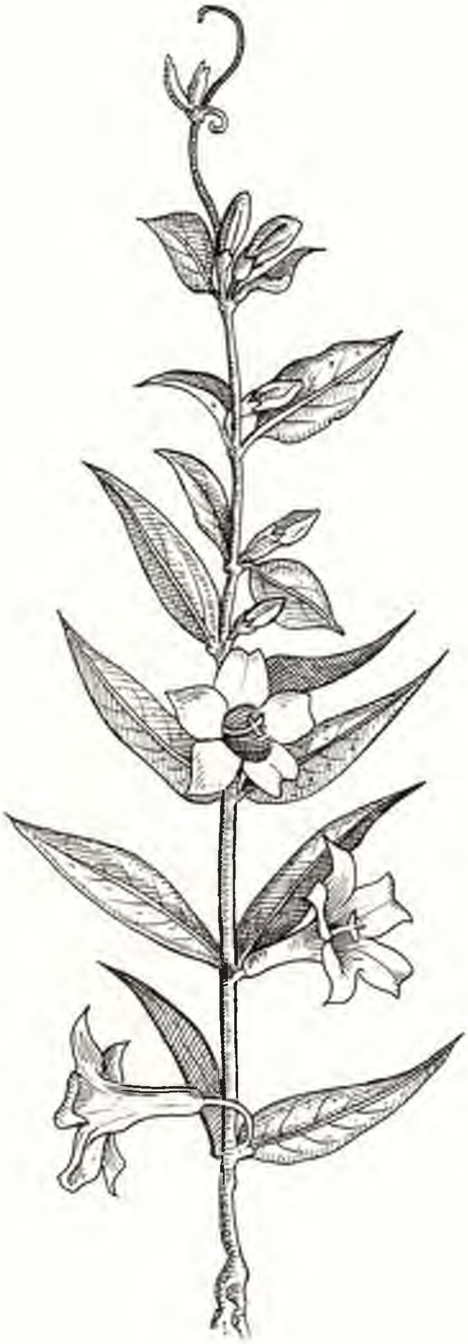
A CLIMBING or creeping liana native to the Americas, Jessamine haunts damp soils, wooded thickets, and riparian corridors, its clinging forms rambling up the greatest of trees. The vine is found in the Southeastern United States, with distribution southward to Guatemala. Its lanceolate leaves are dark green, and the plant is recognized by its fragrant, yellow funnel-shaped flowers. Exhaling a jasmine-like scent, it is also known as Carolina Jasmine, False Jasmine and Woodbine.

All parts of the plant are poisonous, including the flower nectar, which can be lethal to honeybees. Native bees, however, can safely gather the nectar. The chief poison is the indole alkaloid gelsemine ($C_{20}H_{22}N_2O_2$), a paralytic. The plant is fatal to browsing livestock, and has been used as an agent of suicide and murder. It has also been valued as a traditional fish poison.

Despite the toxicity, the vine was used in Native American medicine, as by the Delaware tribe who valued the root as a blood purifier and as an ointment for healing. Similarly, the tincture and the reduced fractions of the plant, such as Gelsemic acid extracted with ether, was of sufficient virtue to warrant inclusion in 19th century editions of the United States Dispensatory. The plant and its chemical complex have been the subject of ongoing scientific studies as a potential human anxiolytic.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF JESSAMINE

Subterfuge, Blindness, Ptosis, Languor, Paralysis, Subjugation, Creeping Hegemony, Cheerful Autarchy, Duplicitous Invitation, Lustrous Raiment, Deadly Allure, Delicious Syncope, and Morbid Terminus.



Owing to its venomous nature, as well as the extension of its domain through slow and deliberate creeping, it is allied with the characteristics of Saturn. Its best magical function, with respect to its character, beauty, and inner secrets, as well as its chemical hostility to animal tissues, is as a living House Ward, planted as a trailing vine to cover walls and arbors at the outer perimeter.

JOB'S TEARS

Coix lachryma-jobi
Poaceæ (Grass Family)

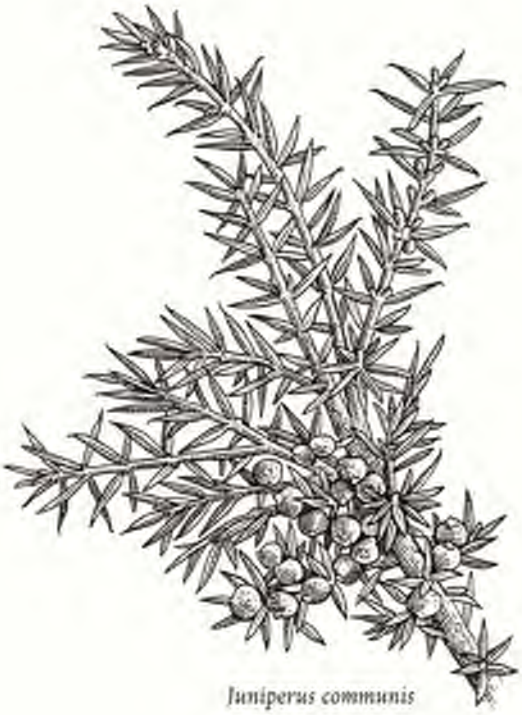
PROCEEDING from the Poaceae, eternal storehouse of life-giving grains, Job's Tears is a perennial native to tropical Asia, growing to one meter in height and noted for its hardened bract or fruit-case, enclosing the seed. In Asia, the hard-shelled varieties are used for beads in the construction of rosaries, while the soft-shelled types are grown as an edible grain crop. The latter kind also serves as the primary substance of fermentation for traditional beers, and is distilled into *okroju*, a traiditonal liquor. The seeds are high in protein in comparison to many cultivated grains. Medicinally, Job's Tears are nutritive, diuretic, and anticancer, and contain coixol, coixenolide, Vitamin B1, leucine, lysine, and arginine. In South America, the root is valued in folk medicine as a vermifuge.

The seeds' most common spiritual function is as beads strung on a rosary. Their occult powers are Bidding, Materialization, and Oblation, the latter circumscribing the offering of prayer through the motion of fingers on the beads. In the West Indies, necklaces of the seeds are worn to answer prayers. A spell of attaining good luck uses seven of the seeds, carried in the pocket, in order to attract all manner of pleasant things and situations. Necklaces of Job's Tears are employed as an Ozark charm for comforting teething babies.

JUNIPER

Juniperus spp.
Cupressaceæ (Cypress Family)

THE GENUS *Juniperus*, encompassing the True Junipers, comprises about 70 separate species of northern hemisphere evergreens, having either flat, frondlike leaves or sharp needles, and small, round aromatic berries. The foliage is sometimes different on juvenile plants, changing with age. Many species prefer growing on limestone substrates. Savin, *Juniperus sabina*, is a native of most mountain provinces of Europe, and is often the favored Juniper of the old magical literature. Juniper species are particularly well respresented in the Rocky Mountains of North America, where a wealth of unique species are endemic, including Rocky Mountain Juniper (*J. scopulorum*), Utah Juniper (*J. osteosperma*), and One-seed Juniper (*J. monosperma*), whose roots extend to a depth of 60 meters below the surface.



Juniperus communis

In North America, the dried leaves and essential oil of Juniper are often sold as 'Cedar' but it is taxonomically quite distant from the genus *Cedrus*, with corresponding differences in traditional magical usage. Confusing the issue, some True Junipers may have the folk name of 'Cedar', as is the case with the so-called Texas Cedar (*Juniperus mexicana*), a tree far more aligned with the ancient character of Juniper. In the magical doctrine of planetary correspondences, the Juniper tree is aligned with the Sun, Mars and Jupiter, and in many ancient traditions has association with the realm of the Dead. The punishing, spiny-branched Arkeuthos (*Juniperus oxycedrus*) was favored ingredient in the prepaations of Medea.

In folk medicine, decoctions of the leaves have been used as a specific for urinary tract complaints, including cyctitis and urethritis. In cases of chronic kidney problems, the plant should be used with caution, or not at all, as it is nephrotoxic and thus antagonistic to this organ. *Juniperus sabina*, as well as *Juniperus horizontalis*, a native of the Great Lakes area of North America, have been used in this manner and are both poisonous to a certain degree. Chemical particulars for these species are sabinol, thujol, and sabinol acetate, and are found in varying concentrations in other species of *Juniperus*.

The oil, which was known in European alchemical traditions as Targar, is an effective antiseptic applied topically in the form of an unguent. *Juniperus communis* has enjoyed a considerable reputation as an abortifacient in the British Isles, in the form of the patent medicine Juniper Pills; the berries are an old specific for dropsy. During the ravages of the Black Death, Juniper was among the strongest weapons of the plague doctor's arsenal, along with Angelica. In his *Natural History*, Pliny reports that Juniper was employed for medicating wines, and that the medicament so compounded was 'good for the stomach.' Bark, berries and needles of *J. monosperma* yield a brown pigment.

As a tree of magical power, and as an adjunct to ceremony and religious rite, Juniper possesses a diverse band of occult powers. These include Consecration, Oblation, Fertility, Allure, Prophecy and Vision. It is also featured in magical rites for protection of the home and livestock, hex-breaking, reconciliation of quarrels, and protection from nightmares. Perhaps its most consistent use is as a burnt and aromatic offering. Scattered on 'coals of thornwood'—perhaps a species of *Zizyphus* or an Acacia—Juniper was used as a suffumigant in ancient Sumerian exorcisms, often accompanied by a libation of beer. Ba Ma (*Juniperus squamata*) is used in Tibet as a traditional aromatic incense; some *Juniperus* species are burnt as incense by the *rogyapas* ('body-breakers') during, or prior to, the rite of Sky Burial. In Tuscany, branches of *Juniperus communis* are burned on Christmas Eve to prevent the malodorous influence of the *malocchio* or Evil Eye.

Several North American species hold positions of great power among its native peoples. The Haisla crafted ceremonial rattles of the wood; it was also used in the sweathouse during the winter. The Navajo used Juniper for a variety of magical tasks. The Tree has been employed as a Sacred Purge in purification rites, the cleansing brought about by ritual vomiting. The Wood is employed to make prayer sticks. Ghost Beads, a string of ant-hollowed juniper berries, are an old Navajo charm against nightmares, especially for children. The Keres used the herb as a funerary smudge, purifying the property of the deceased with fragrant smoke. *Juniperus deppeana* was especially esteemed as a ceremonial incense.

The Spirit-Retinue of Juniper

Retribution, Shriveling, Aridity, Abortion,
Infiltration, Exclusivity, Piquancy, Resinous
Incitement, Sanctified Vapors, Verdant
Armoring, Impeccable Partitions,
Prickly Antipathy, and
Masked Warfare.

European traditions reference wild-growing Junipers serving as portals to the otherworld or underworld. In Northern Germany, the spirit of the Juniper is known as Frau Wachholder, and she is invoked to discover thieves and force them to return burgled goods. The magic required the aggrieved party to approach a Juniper in a wild place, separating a branch and anchoring it to the ground. The thief was then summoned and compelled to return the stolen property. In Norway, the tree has an ancient reputation for protection against malefic spirits; one such magical preparation was *Einerlaag*, a purificatory water infused with Juniper branches and berries.

> TO CAUSE THE RETURN
> OF STOLEN GOODS.
>
> Go out early in the morning before sunrise, to a juniper-bush and bend it towards the sun with the left hand and say: Juniper-bush, I make you bow and stoop till thief puts the stolen goods of N. N. to their place. Then take a stone, lay it on the bush and under the stone on the bush, place the skull of a malefactor †††. You must take care when the thief has returned the stolen goods, to take the stone off the bush, and lay it where and as it was and release the bush.
>
> *The Long-Hidden Friend*, 1820

The plant's magical potency as a protector against evildoers is also known from traditional charms in Italy; to protect horses, it was a custom to hang boughs of Juniper in stables. In Scotland, sprigs of the tree were boiled in water for a strong decoction, used to sprinkle cattle to drive away illness. In Slavic magic, especially in Poland, Juniper was placed on the rooftop and other parts of the house exterior as an anti-witchcraft talisman on Midsummer night. Juniper is also a traditional Christmastide bough.

By far, the tree's most famous intersection with the human world in modern times, aside from a garden mainstay, is the beloved alcoholic spirit Gin, which owes its aromatic backbone to the Juniper, augmented by selected spices. Long confined to a handful of similar flavor profiles, microdistilling trends in the last two decades have spawned some truly exceptional gins. Of particular artistry are the products of St. George's distillery in Alameda, California. Their sublime 'Terroir' formulation makes use of several native California plants including sprigs of Douglas Fir harvested from our own Mt. Tamalpais. The spirit possesses a vivified quality entirely true to the *genius loci* of the Marin headlands, and broadening the botanical ambit of the British gin tradition.

Incense: Desert Spirits I

As a perpetual disciple of the woodland, much of my contemplative time is spent in the wild deserts and chaparral of California, particularly the Pinyon-Juniper woodlands of the Inner Coast Ranges. Wandering these forlorn and majestic places, it is my practice to pay my respects to the untamed thickets of California Juniper (*Juniperus californica*), a vital and powerful anchoring spirit of this *genius loci*. At the peak of the day's heat, the sun volatilizes a fraction of their essential oils and all the air is filled with a green and noble savor. The following loose incense is drawn from this environment, and is burned to evoke its power.

Leaves of Desert Juniper, dry, with twig	30 g
Berries of Desert Juniper, dry, whole	20
Resin of Pinyon Pine, dry	20 g
Leaves of Yerba Santa, dry	15 g
Leaves of *Artemisia tridentata*, dry	10 g
Leaves of White Sage, dry	5 g

Red Wine, 14–16% ABV
Honey
Tincture of Myrrh

¶ Juniper berries are placed in an uncovered vessel, with sufficient wine to cover, for 7 days. In a separate and open vessel, Juniper leaves are macerated for the same duration in sufficient tincture of Myrrh to cover. The wine-soaked berries and the Myrrh-drenched Juniper leaves are then combined, leaving the plant bodies whole. The remainder of the ingredients are ground and thoroughly incorporated, along with the honey. The mixture is rested several days in an uncovered vessel, turning frequently, until dry.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Protection, Liminality, Prophecy, Exorcism, Love Charm.
Virtue: Preservation.
Element: Fire.
Planets: Saturn, Sun.
Star: Sirius.
Deific Forms: Holda.
Domains: Graveyards, Necropoli, Liminal Spaces.
Body Part: Kidneys.
Therapeutic: Catharsis..
Affliction: Psychogenic Pain.
Image: A Wild-woman standing at a lych-gate clad in a dress of leaves, crowned with Savine berries and holding a wooden club.

KOLA

Cola nitida

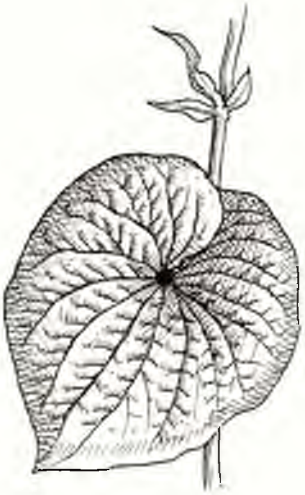
Malvaceæ (Mallow Family)

A TREE native to tropical Western Africa growing to 20 meters, with star-shaped fruits containing 8 ruddy aromatic seeds. There are two species of Kola, K. *acuminata* and K. *nitida*. The seed, usually fresh, is the portion used, and contains up to 2.2% caffeine and 0.05% theobromine. It is known as Obi-Abata, Gurru, and Bissy Nut.

Its action on the body is as a stimulant and tonic bitter. Its use as a bittering agent has given rise not only to bitters preparations, but also certain notorious carbonated beverages. The seeds are chewed, or ground and boiled in 250 ml of water to 10 g of the seed.

Its occult powers are Blessing, Initiation, and Protection; Kola is used as an aphrodisiac and magical amulet in West Africa.

Initiates of Yoruba-derived religions use *Obi-Abata* for diviniation. It is also chewed as an invigorating devotional sacrament. The fresh nut is accompanied by seeds of *atare* (*Aframomum melegueta*), which gives rise to a brisk, illuminating heat that encompassses the entire head, acting in synergy with the virtues of the nut.



KAVA KAVA

Piper methysticum
Piperaceae (Pepper Family)

‘AWA is a tall tropical perennial shrub from 2 to 3 meters in height, with large cordate or ovate leaves, cultivated in the South Pacific Islands, Hawai’i and New Guinea. It has long been grown for its psychoactive root and, like many plants having a history of cultivation by humans, Kava has lost much of its ability to sexually reproduce, relying instead on vegetative propagation. Its status as ‘sterile’ cultigen notwithstanding, Kava has proliferated a great variety of cultivars, each with its own effects upon the body, as well as cultural requirements. As a member of the genus *Piper*, it belongs to a venerable group of plants rich in ethnobotanical tradition, containing some 2,000 individual plants, including such noteworthy species as Black Pepper (*P. nigrum*), Cubeb (*P. cubeba*), and and Betel (*P. betle*). ‘*Awa* is one of the venerated ‘canoe crops’ of Hawaiian culture, having been brought great distances across the sea, via outrigger ships, to the islands with its human population. This elite band of botanicals, comprising foods, medicines, and fiber plants, is widespread across the greater geographic area of Austronesia. The plant is thought to have been domesticated in Vanuatu.

Its action upon the body is as a sedative, euphoriant tranquilizer, antifungal, antiseptic, and muscle relaxant. Folk medicine has used the plant for an almost endless variety of uses, from abortifacient to anodyne. It may be compounded as a lipidic salve, sometimes in combination with Cannabis, and its relaxing principles absorbed transdermally. Prepared as a tincture in combination with Valerian root, it is a highly effective sleep aid when taken orally.

Kava roots contain 3–20% kava-pyrones, also called kavalactones. The chief compounds of this group are kawain, dihydrokawain, methysticin, dihydromethysticin, yangonin, and desmethoxyyangonin, though some 15 other pyrones are known.

The fresh or dried root pulp and lower stems are the portions employed, the root is also available in powdered form, and as a standardized extract. Traditional use of the plant as a euphoriant involves grinding, pounding or chewing the fresh root, then adding the pulp to water or coconut milk for the desired consistency. Dried and processed ‘Awa, while providing acceptable medicine in some cases, degrades quickly. Excessive use of the plant may produce the condition of *kani kani*, a dermatitis which, in pronounced cases, torments the skin with cracking and scaling.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF KAVA KAVA

Physicality, Trust, Community, Collaboration, Rootedness, Dignity, Mediation, Contentment, Enthrallment, Laxity, Sensual Consonance, Ancestral Counsel, & Sacred Obligation.

As considered from the old European doctrines of planetary correspondence, the plant resonates with the esoteric principles of Venus, but also, in some respects, Saturn. Its associated spirit-powers are Allure, Oblation, Ancestral Rites, Exorcism, Divination, and Protection from Maleficia. The related *Piper* species P. *wichmannii* (from which Kava is descended) and P. *subpeltatum* have been used for unbewitching and love magic, respectively. As Pendell notes in *Pharmako/poeia*, this is an herb *par excellance* for accessing the spirit world. It may be drunk in divinatory rites as a liminal ally for seeking oracular advice from ancestors.

KHAT

Catha edulis

Celastraceæ (Staff-Tree Family)

A PERENNIAL shrub to 10 meters in height, endemic to wooded areas of Ethiopia, and now cultivated elsewhere, as in Yemen. Its leaves are oblong, ovate, or lanceolate. The small white-petaled flowers are borne in cymes; the stems may be white, pink or red. Larger specimens can develop a central leader and become trees, and in colder temperate ranges, the plant can be deciduous. At one time, due to its hardiness in xeric conditions and ability to prevent erosion, Khat was a common landscape plant in California, seen even in highway meridian plantings. In the United States, Khat is presently a federally scheduled substance, and a frequent target of social demonization.

Catha edulis is a euphoric stimulant, with a long history of social use in its zone of origin. The fresh young leaves are chewed and held in the mouth; they contain the eponymous alkaloid cathinone ($C_9H_{11}NO$), as well as various methylated amphetaminaes and methamphetamines. Khat is sacred to Ethiopian Sufis, who use it to attain mystic states.

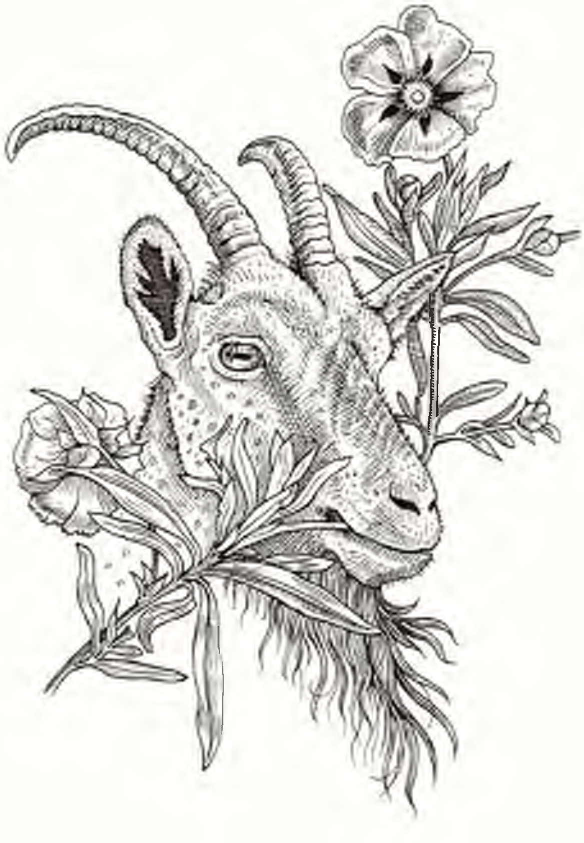
As considered within the rubric of planetary correspondence, the plant is aligned with Mars and Mercury, being hot, drying, and stimulating to the sensorium. Its chief occult properties are Illumination and Oblation. As an adjunct to contemplation, it excels equally as a plant invoking Memory, and consideration of future time.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF KHAT

Elation, Attentiveness, Precision, Connectivity, Conviviality, Rhapsody, Articulation, Persistence, Irresistability, Entrapment, Animated Reverie, Insatiate Want, and Gracious Surrender.

When chewing the fresh leaves, first the palate, and then the entire head, seem eclipsed by an astringent, peppery, greenness which steadily brightens in a burgeoning luminescence of thought. Far away from the immediacy of this wild intelligence, one perceives a distant and restrained sweetness. The personality of the plant is both subtle and assertive, expanding its influence with successive leaves offering ever-increasing subtleties of sensation and awareness. With the head serving as a forward operating base, it goes forth as an army, moving on to conquer the rest of the body, sense by sense, and thought by thought, as sprouts greening a field. It preaches its word through eloquent song, bringing messages of burning illumination to the endarkened recesses of the world.

Although neither as intimate nor as vivified as chewing the leaves, a worthy elixir made be made from the plant. The fresh young leaves may be tinctured in high-proof ethanol (70%+ ABV) for extraction of the plant's stimulating principles, and after a time in repose, this may then be, according to the methods of the liqueur, sweetened with the addition of aromatics such as Orange, Rose, Cubeb or Allspice.



LABDANUM

Cistus ladanifer

Cistaceæ (Rock-Rose Family)

A GLOSSY-LEAVED Rockrose preferring poor soils and ample sunshine, with white blossoms and an alluring fragrance. Labdanum resin was collected by ancient shepherds from the beards of goats who had grazed upon the leaves. Today Labdanum is gathered in with belts or ſtraps that are rubbed through thickets of the plant, collecting that which adheres. Though native to the Mediterranean, it does well in similar climates. Those who have the climate and the soil to grow it are commended to do so, for it is a plant which, demanding little, gives a great deal, both in its beauty in the garden and its plant material. The part favored for magical and medicinal use is the leaves, their resinous exudate, and its derived essential oil. Other species of fragrant Rockrose were traditionally used to perfume baths.

> It cheers up humans, ſtrengthens the brain and is extremely efficacious againſt fainting attacks, and if anyone's heart is causing problems, it has such a lovely perfume that the more you hold it to your nose, the more pleasant and attractive it is.
>
> NOSTRADAMUS

Its correspondence with the planets is ſtrongly Solar, with some Venusian attributes. Its powers in magic and ritual are Summoming, Allure and Consecration. Labdanum is frequently used in incense formulations from the European grimoires, owing to its musky, floral and resinous scent when burned. The 13th century grimoire *Liber Juratus* prescribes an incense of Labdanum, amber, musk, Aloes, Maſtic and Frankincense to consecrate the Seal of the True and Living God. Labdanum is also found in the grimoire *De Nigromantia*, attributed to Roger Bacon, where it used together with Saffron as a ritual suffumigant.

While burned Labdanum resin serves to summon spirits, the essential oil, by way of perfumes which make use of it, serves to summon the beloved, thus it may also be considered a love-sharm in certain uses. Its peculiar musk blends well with human scent and readily transforms to suit the gender of the one who wears it.

The aromatic resin may be extracted from the leaves via ſteam diſtillation, but a simpler and less cumbersome method for capturing their wonders is simply to place as many in a clean jar as possible, either fresh or dried, and cover them entirely with neutral spirit, sealed and kept in a dark place for three or more months. After being ſtrained, this liquid may be used as a perfume, as a ritual wash.

The twigs, after being cut from the plant and shade-dried, serve a wonderful purpose for kindling the ritual fire. Densely impregnanted with aromatic resin, they burn with great heat and enthusiasm, while also perfuming the air.

LADY'S MANTLE

Alchemilla vulgaris

Rosaceæ (Rose Family)

LADY'S Mantle is a hardy perennial with characteriſtic round, scalloped leaves borne on ſtems rising directly from the crown, producing yellow-green flowers in the summer. In the garden its presence is at once serene and quietly assertive. There are 21 species of *Alchemilla*.

Lady's Mantle was favored for certain therapeutic uses, including as an aſtringent, anti-inflammatory, ſtypic, nervine, and galactagogue. The herb is a friend to wounds, hemmorhages, bleeding gums, diarrhea, and used to arreſt excessive menſtruation. Externally, a decoction of the leaves will ease acne and eye infection or irritation. The tincture has some repute as a specific for nervous spasm and convulsive disorders.

It enjoys a planetary correspondence with Venus, and in magic is generally used for harnessing the powers of ease, beauty and for love-charms. In the Middle Ages, sorcerers prized the dewdrops which naturally collected in the central reservoir of the cuplike leaves. This mesmerizing water, evocative of quicksilver, was believed to possess subtle but potent powers and was favored for use in potions. When placed under the pillow, the plant was regarded as a sure charm for bringing sleep.

An Irish cure for cows ſtricken with elf-shot was made from the juice of Lady's Mantle, into which had been immersed a silver and copper coin, and a flint. Three drinks of the mixture, as well as a sprinkling in alone the spine of the animal, and in its ears, was sure to assuage the evil.

When gathering the herb, the entire plant should be collected during flowering, in early summer, shortly after the dew has evaporated.

LARCH

Larix spp.

Pinaceæ (Pine Family)

THE genus *Larix* comprises 14 accepted species of conifer growing to 45 meters in height, with feathery, glaucous needles, squamous stems, and small cones. Endemic to the northern hemisphere, it prefers swamps, marshes, and other inundated soils. Among conifers some Larches are anomalous, being deciduous rather than evergreen.

The tree has ethnobotanical usage as medicine, fiber and food. The leaves are nutritive, used as a starvation food; a strong leaf decoction can be used as a bath for painful or swollen joints. The bark is used as an anti-inflammatory. In the ethnobotany of the European Romany, tea made from Larch inflorescence was a valued mental stimulant. Oleoresin derived from the European species *Larix occidentalis* yields the valued product Venice Turpentine for art and equine medicine. Tamarack (*L. laricina*) is a Larch native to North America, it is a commercial source of Larch Needle oil, rich in such aromatic constituents as α-pinene Δ3-carene, and β-pinene.

Its powers as used magic are Illumination, Inspiration, Protection, Exorcism, and fetish-making. The parts used are the wood, leaves, cones, and resin. When gum or leaves are used, it especially excels as a suffumigant, in both ceremony and medicine. Larch wood, being naturally rot resistant, was employed for use in the construction of traditional items including drums.

> Yes, I have brought to help our vows
> Horned poppy, Cypress bough,
> The fig tree wild that grows on tombs,
> And juice from which the Larch tree comes.
>
> BEN JOHNSON
> *The Witches' Song*

The tree was accorded the powers of protection from fire, arising from the popular, though incorrect, belief that the wood was impenetrable by flame. Certain American Larches were believed to incept madness and delusion if one slept in the shadows of their branches. In the spiritual traditions of North America, the Kutenai used a Larch for the center pole of the Sundance. The fragrant smoke of the burned needles makes a potent magical fume against venomous beasts.

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LARKSPUR

Delphinium spp., *Consolida* spp.
Ranunculaceæ (Buttercup Family)

LARKSPURS comprise 50 species of annual plants of the genus *Consolida*, and 450 species of perennial plants of the genus *Delphinium*, ranging in height from 0.1 to 2 meters. They bear purple, blue or violet flowers with characteristic spurs, and producing a wealth of small ebony seeds. The plants are distributed mainly in montane areas of the northern hemisphere, many favoring calcareous soils. Relatives of Monkshood, all parts of the plant are toxic to humans, many are harmful to livestock as well. Their poisons notwithstanding, the eldritch beauty of the Larkspur has granted it the status of favored garden plant, where it is often the visual focus during its blooming season due to its distinct shape and intense coloring.

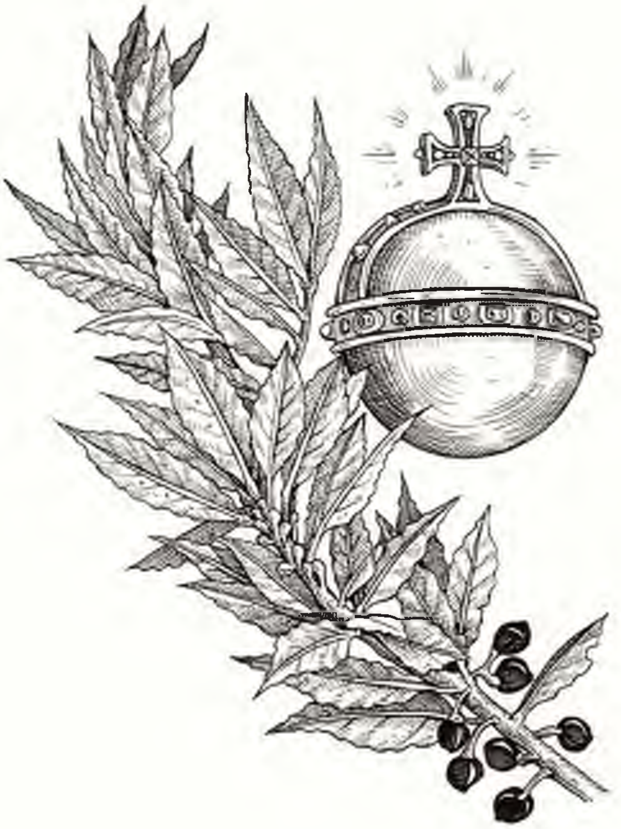
In some folk medical traditions, the blossoms and seeds are used variously as diuretics and vermifuges. The Larkspur known as *Consolida ajacis* was employed medicinally, in external applications, for the destruction of head lice. *The Master of the Game*, a medieval English book on hunting by the 2nd Duke of York, mentions the juices of *Consolida major* and *C. minor*, as helpful for the healing of broken bones in hounds. A blue color, used for ink, is derived from the juices of *Delphinium consolida*, mordanted with alum; the blue color arises in part from the anthocyanidn delphinidin ($C_{15}H_{11}O_7+$), a plant pigment occurring in other fruits such as bilberries and pomegranates.

Concentration of Larkspur toxins is strongest in the seeds, which contain significant venomous diterpene alkaloids such as methyllycaconitine, as well as delphidine, delphinine, delphinidin, delphirine, delphisine and neoline. Poisoning causes hypersalivation, nausea and loss of motor coordination; in severe cases, death may occur by respiratory paralysis.

In consideration of the influences of the spheres, the plant is governed by the dual planetary emanation of Saturn and Venus, and by the element of Water. Its occult powers, as reflected by its human usage in magic, are Courage, Fertility, Attraction, Vigor, and Success in Hunting. In the garden, the perennial Delphiniums are especially suited as guardians of the home.

Larkspurs of both genera were valued for their power in Native American medicine and magic, and as a blue dye and paint. The Nlaka'pamux women of British Columbia used the Menzies Larkspur (*Delphinium menziesii*) as a potent love-charm; the plant was known to attract and retain the affections of men and was known by the name 'Scales of a Raven's Foot.' In Navajo ceremony, the blue petals are ground to a powder and offered to the South, as the blue is the sacred color of that direction. Navajo women also ate *D. scaposum* as a fertility aid, and the Ramah Navajo used the ground azure flowers as a charm to assure success in hunting. The Kiowa used the small seeds of *D. carolinianum* ssp. *virescens* in sacred rattles for the Peyote ceremony.

In Germany, talismans of Rocket Larkspur flowers (*Delphinium ajacis*), were used by young people on St. John's Eve as protection from misfortune for the following year.



LAUREL

Laurus nobilis
Lauraceæ (Laurel Family)

LAUREL, or Sweet Bay as it is also known, is a stately tree native to the Mediterranean having strongly aromatic gray-green leaves, and growing to a height of 18 meters, though there are dwarf cultivars for garden planting. Its small fruit is a single-seeded oval berry, black when ripe, that produces a stimulating scent. The portions used are the leaves, branches, wood, and fruits. The genus *Laurus* contains three accepted species; the tree gives its name to the Lauraeae, a plant family characterized by fragrant spice-trees such as Cinnamon and Camphor. Also known as Grecian Laurel, it is the source of the spice Bay Leaf, an essential ingredient in Mediterranean cuisine.

In folk medicine, the fruits have been utilized to promote abortions, and oil of Laurel is sometimes used topically for sprains. Laurel also formed part of the green arsenal of the European plague-doctor who unsed it to banish or disperse 'bad airs' thought to spread disease. English midwives rubbed the leaves on the feet of babies born feet-first, for they were thought succeptible by this omen to laming accidents.

The many powers ascribed Laurel in magical operations include Divination, Prophecy, Potentiation, Allure, Marriage, Oblation, Wealth, Protection from Maleficia, Success in Gambling, Protection from Disease, and Weather Magic. The botanists of old variously assign Laurel to the planetary influences of the Sun and Jupiter, and these associations are well justified. Yet, a portion of its essence must also be considered Saturnian, given its association with narcosis, trance, and the corpse. Held in especial wonder for the regenerative greening of its felled stumps, Laurel leaves held solemn funeral power and were used to strew both corpse and coffin in England.

In Spanish folk magic, leaves and branches are regarded as powerful anti-witchcraft magic and are used to combat *maj ojo*. A Slavic ritual to bind the *Vila*, or malignant spirit of clouds and storms, burnt a suffumigation compounded of consecrated oil, Laurel leaves, and Wormwood. These items were mixed and thrown on the hearthfire, or, burned in a brazier and used to thuirfy the docmicile. Planted near the door it kept away plague, malevolent persons, and the polluting influences of the Evil Eye.

In European necromancy, suffumigations of Laurel leaves are used by the magician for opening the consecrated Circle in the grimore *De Nigromantia*, attributed to Roger Bacon. This same Book of Art also directs the magical operator to use a specially made altar of Laurel wood, "fresh cut and resinous." Likewise, the author favors Laurel for the making of the magical rod or scepter, used to command spirits. Ashes of Laurel wood combined with Frankincense are an ingredient in the preparation of the magical artifact known as Solomon's Mirror in *The Grand Grimoire*.

The Spirit-Retinue of Laurel

Valor, Sophistication, Sacrosanctity, Grandeur, Accolade, Acquisition, Reward, Edification, Braggadocio, Gloating, Decorous Custom, Bloated Triumphalism, and Radiant Sagacity.

Laurel leaves were chewed by the ancient Greeks as protection from noxious spirits; indeed, this is an effective way to discern the complex and sometimes overwhelming power of this tree. It was sacred to Apollo, god of prophecy, and the leaves much used in his rites.

Some old weather-controlling rituals employ leaves of Laurel to send away thunderstorms or protect one from lightning in their midst; Marsilio Ficino, in his *Liber de Vita*, extols the Laurel's virtues for repelling lightning, as well as poison. A rustic Slavonian spell to frustrate and stupefy cloud-flying witches used a hexing-smoke of burning leaves of Laurel and Wormwood.

California Bay Laurel

Umbellularia californica, a Bay species native to North America, may be found in California and Oregon, and bears much of its old-world cousin's powers, though stronger in aroma. At an aromatic strength many times that of its European relative, it is especially suited to perfumes. The leaves of this tree were widely esteemed by a number of Native American tribes for their protective and purifying powers. For this they were often hung in the home as a talisman.

Aromatic fruits of Bay Laurel, as well as the leaves, may be compounded in incense, or steeped in rectified spirit over a period of weeks to produce a fragrant wash. It blends well with allied aromatics such as clove and carnation, and its virtues may be concentrated in the alchemical alembic, either as a hydrosol, or a fractional distillation. Native Americans used a suffumigation produced from smoldering leaves to repel fleas.

Bay Rhum Sauvage

California Bay Laurel unripe fruits	10
California Bay Laurel leaves, fresh, cut	15 g

250 ml gold rum 75.5% ABV

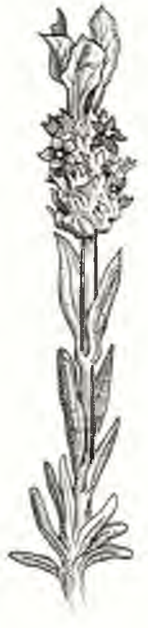
☾ A simple and bioregional alternative to the classic Bay Rum cologne. The unripe fruits of the California Bay Laurel are pricked multiple times and placed in the steeping vessel, along with fresh and coarsely-broken leaves of the same tree. The liquor is steeped for three months, strained and bottled. If, upon decanting the perfume, one prefers a stronger fragrance, more leaves can be added and steeped another month.

As a tree of magical medicine, Laurel was valued against plague. In the Middle Ages, music played on a zither made from Laurel or Vine wood was said to drive away the pestilence, and a Laurel tree planted by the door was an English country charm for protection from plague.

Generally, the tree is amenable to harvest and selective pruning. Enfoliated branches are pruned prior to flowering, usually in spring, and are dried whole or in wreaths. The leaves may also be dried separate from the branches, but the wood is also aromatic and an excellent ally in rites of fumigation. Its hard and straight wood excels as a wand.

LAVENDER

Lavandula angustifolia; Lavandula spp.
Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)



LAVENDER may be considered a natural plant talisman, used for strewing, perfumery, as an amulet in the form of a dried flower-bundle, and as a living embodiment of protective power in the garden. It has been held in high regard in nearly all human relations, its fragrance linked in olfactory consciousness with the virtue of cleanliness.

The plant is a shrubby perrenial herb to 1 m high with gray or glaucous foliage and tall flower-spikes. The number of accepted species in the genus *Lavandula* is approximately 45, though others are undergoing assessment. There are numerous subspecies and cultivars, and the plant readily hybridizes.

Exuding beneficial power from both flowers and leaves, its therapeutic properties are nervine, anti-inflammatory, and circulatory. Like many of the Mint kin, Lavender may be employed as an infusion internally to check intestinal gas. The essential oil applied externally will calm toothaches and swollen gums, sprains, and stressed joints and muscles. Lavender unguents were esteemed after-bath lotions among the ancient Greeks and Romans; French Lavender (*L. stoechas*) was valued by the Greeks as a remedy against poisons and serpents' venom. Yet another notable virtue of this herb's scent is its ability to lift the spirits and extend a calmative influence; sleep-pillows may also be made from the dried blossoms. Autumn is the proper season for collecting the flower spike, this is accomplished ideally in in the early morning after dew has dried. If the flowers are destined for distillation into essential oil, collect flowers in early morning just prior to opening.

In planetary correspondence, Lavender is aligned with Mercury and Jupiter, and some with excellent rationale assign it to the Sun. In folk magic, ritual and lore its associated powers are Healing, Longevity, Love, Allure, Coercion, Protection, Purification and Chastity.

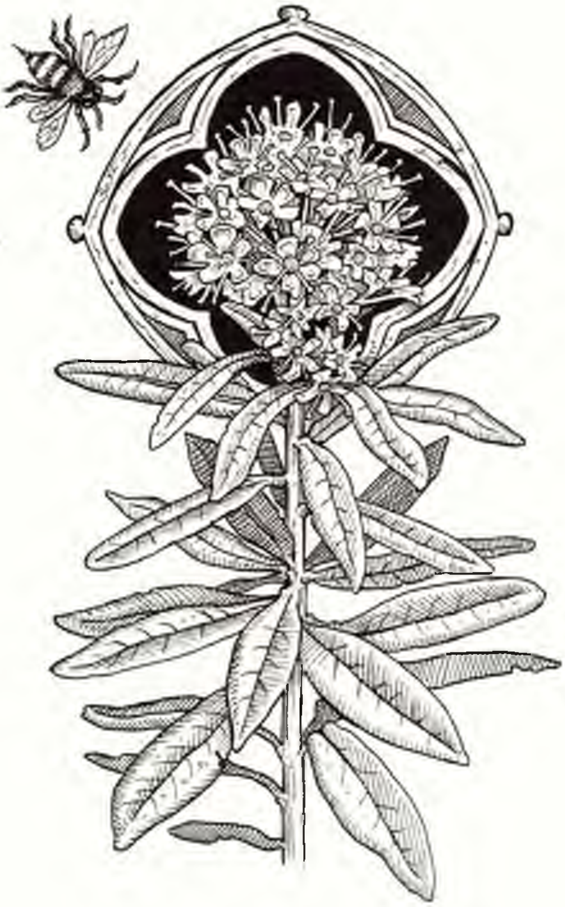
In the Dark Ages, herb-sprigs of Lavender were carried to ward off the plague. Flower stalks of *Lavandula pedunculata* are highly esteemed in Spanish folk magic for warding off the baneful influences of the Evil Eye. It has also been used as a traditional strewing herb in Spanish churches.

The grimoire *Lemegeton* specifies a ceremonial sprinkler made from the twigs of Vervain, Fennel, Lavender, and Hyssop, bound together with a handle from boxwood (*Buxus* spp.). The water thus sprinkled is mixed with salt, and prepared in a vessel of brass, lead, or clay. The sprinkler may indeed be made with fresh plant material, and as such that is its best and most aromatic use, but the plant material may also be dried and fashioned into a small fetish-broom.

The plant enjoys culinary use, as a flavoring of breads and desserts. Lavender is included in North American formulæ of Herbes de Provence, which also includes Rosemary, Thyme, Marjoram, and Savory. In recent years it has also been used in syrups, cordials, and cocktails.

The Spirit-Retinue of Lavender

Affability, Balance, Dichotomy, Salutation, Lavation, Inspiration, Lubricity, Rapturous Bouquets, Floral Masks, Perfumed Recollections, Worshipful Blessing, Ennobled Flesh, and Smoldering Arousal.



LEDUM

Rhododenron tomentosum

Ericaceæ (Heath Family)

LEDUM is an evergreen shrub dwelling in boggy places, growing to 2 meters, with strongly fragrant leaves and white flowers. The plant is native to Eurasia, also found in Korea, Japan, and North America. It was formerly classed as genus *Ledum*. Among its many folk names are Crystal Tea, Wild Rosemary, Marsh Tea, and Porst.

Its ascribed medicinal virtues are as an Antiseptic, diaphoretic, diuretic, abortifacient, anti-rheumatic. Recent clinical studies indicate the herb effectively prolongs sleep. The North American species, *Ledum groenlandicum*, or

Labrador Tea, was employed by American Indian women as a narcotic prior to childbirth, as well as to alleviate symptoms of headache. It is also employed externally to combat eczema and annihilate lice and insects.

The chemical particulars of this plant have been responsible for livestock poisoning, as well as fatalities among women who have attempted use as an abortifacient. These constituents include ledol, a sesquiterpenic crystalline alcohol, as well as ericolin, arbutin, and palustrol. Ledol is an irritant and toxic stupefacient: internal consumption is marked by initial giddiness and exhilaration; later followed by cramping, vomiting and violent loosening of the bowels. Muscular pain and spasms may also occur, and the chemistry of Labrador Tea and its relatives ise extremely inhospitable to the renal pathways.

Decidedly potent brews of Ancient Europe, including traditional beers, made use of Ledum as a delirium-producing adjunct, and Ledum-infused beers have been proposed as a sacrament of the raging, zealous Berserkers of Northern Europe.

The leaves may be burned for their intensely fragrant smoke; Siberian Tungus shamans burned Ledum, sometimes mixed with Juniper, for trance induction. Likewise, the herb was also employed in the sorceries of the Giljacs for oracular work.

In North America, the Tanana peoples employed branches of Ledum as a purifying switch in the Sweathouse. Use of the related North American species *Ledum columbianum* as a hot beverage by California coastal Indians has been documented.

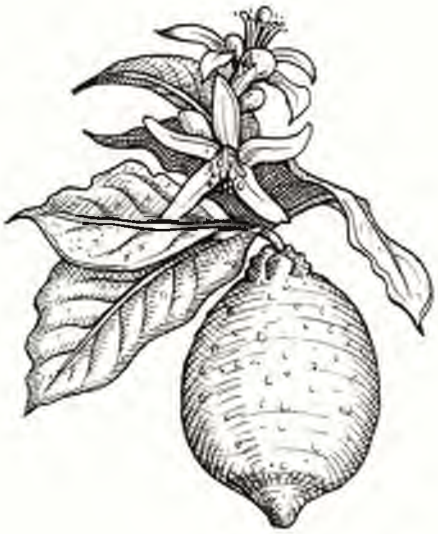
In Poland, branches of the shrub were used as a house-talisman on Midsummer night, its intoxicating properties thought to make witches dizzy while in flight.

LEMON

Citrus limon

Rutaceæ (Rue Family)

A TREE, sometimes with significant thorns, 3–4 meters high, having aromatic, dark green leaves and 5-petaled white flowers. The fruit is yellow, being spherical or ellipsoid, containing an acidic juice, while the essential oil is concentrated in the rind. There are many cultivars, such as the Meyer Lemon, with a thin skin and less tartness; another is the variegated Pink Lemon, whose rind is striped with green and yellow, and whose interior flesh is pink. Medicinally, the Lemon is antiscorbutic, febrifuge, diaphoertic, antirheumatic, and astringent. Oil of Lemon is a rubefacient. The portions used are the leaves, flowers, and fruit, all of which are fragrant; the fruit rind is highly aromatic and easily dried and stored. Native to India, the Lemon came to Europe in the Middle Ages, but cultivation of the tree was long confined to the southern portion of the continent.



Like most *Citrus* species, Lemon is aligned with the Sun and embodies solar virtue, being bright, cheerful, nourishing and cleansing. Its powers as used in occult practices are Wealth, Commerce, Binding and Exorcism.

Lemon fruits have been used as effigies in a surprising number of death-spells. The famed curse known as the *Faturra della morte* of Naples consisted of "a Neopolitan green lemon into which 24 clout-headed nials and a half-dozen wire nails are stuck. The nails being secured by a string twisted round their heads."

The fruit is the used of in an old dream divination with vestiges of phallic worship. Girls rubbed their bedposts with the peel of a lemon carried in their pockets by day; by night, their dreams revealed the men they were to wed.

Thorns from wild Lemon have traditionally been used in India for tattooing. The leaves and flowers are saturated with heady aromatic compounds and can be used in rites of strewing.

LEMON BALM

Melissa officinalis
Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

ALSO known in ancient herbal literature as simply *Balm*, Melissa is a perennial native to Southern Europe and the Mediterranean. Though it can get slightly larger, it usually grows between 50 cm and 1 m in height and produces small white flowers which are particularly nectareous and attract bees. The portions used are the leaves and blossoms. Easily grown in the garden, it proliferates readily and must be kept in check by thinning. A modern variety known as Lime Balm is lime scented.

Balm has a long medicinal use from ancient times, and is sedative, nervine, and carminative. In ancient times, the oil was used as a surgical dressing, and the tea or tincture may be taken to counter insomnia.

The Spirit-Retinue of Lemon Balm

Brightness, Assurance, Comfort, Meditation,
Nurturance, Rehabilitation, Revival,
Patience, Restitution, Concealed
Strengths, Earthly Charms,
Fair Graces & Elated
Dispositions.

Allied with the planetary characters of the Sun and Jupiter, its occult properies are Healing, Love, Allure, and Exorcism. Generally, for magical use it is sought for its properties of general beneficence, and power to brighten the mood or change personal affect for the better. It somewhat resembles St. Johnswort in magical action, and has ancient use as a House Ward, planted by the front door to repel evil spirits.

In England, an old Staffordshire legend relates that a Wandering Jew stopped by the house of an ailing man. The exile recommended leaves of Lemon Balm steeped in beer to cure the affliction, and the man, following his advice, recovered.

Girolamo Cardano, in his text *De Subtiltate* of 1550, links eating *Melissa* with pleasant dreams (as opposed to the vile and gloomy nightmares produced by eating beans, garlic and onions).

From personal use, I concur that its oneirogenic activity, though subtle, is generally favorable—though not always revelatory—and can be combined with other plants. In this capacity, its use for dreaming excels for those whose obsessional thoughts lead to sleep disturbed by anxiety dreams. With other sympathetic plants such as Rose or Chamomile for an efficacious dreaming tea. Used alone, I prefer it brewed from fresh leaves in hot infusion, and as strong as possible.

The fresh leaves can also be used to provide a deep emerald color to finish absinthe after distillation, without the use of artificial dyes or metallic salts usually used in the commercial product.

THE DREAM-BOOK OF SYLVANUS

A GATHERING OF PLANT SIGNS AS APPEARING IN DREAM

KNOWLEDGE of dream interpretation is ancient, and has concerned itself in great measure with divination, based on the appearance in dream of symbolic objects. Among these are those of vegetal origin, for trees, herbs, fruits, and other plant parts frequently ingress the dreaming body. Although dream interpretation texts also have an ancient pedigree, few, if any such manuals have devoted themselves solely to collecting the divinatory meanings of plants as they occur in the dream-state. The following plant omens are thus presented, gathered from sources as diverse as antique dream-chapbooks, scriptures of various magical and religious traditions, and my own first-hand lore and observation from over a quarter of a century of collecting the dreams of others.

When divining dreams that contain plants, it is critical for the interpreter to consider the individual plants themselves as participants in a complex oneiric algorithm whose variables are interdependent and work together to yield revelation. For example, to dream of an unripe fruit, or those gathered out of season, indicates failure in an endeavor, or may portend sickness or death, but whether it is eaten, plucked, or merely seen contains further shades of meaning, as does its interaction with other dreamt components. Besides the symbols themselves one must also consider the dreamer, the dreaming locus, and the activities immediately preceding the dreaming state.

✠

Acorn. Foison, potential, investment. If given as a gift, a transmission of spiritual power.

Almonds. The tree, when dreamt as a whole and filled with nuts, is of good portent. To dream of bitter Almonds portends a perilous journey; if the Almonds are of the sweet variety, the voyage will be prosperous. Eating almonds within a dream signifies poverty. Branches indicate successful passage through wilderness, or other ordeal. Rotten almonds, if seen or eaten, foretell humiliation and weakness.

Anemone. Loneliness, horror, affliction.

Apple. A dream of Apples portends the longevity of the dreamer, as well as prosperity in trade. If one beholds a tree filled with a great many fruits, it signifies many descendants. To glimpse the tree and eat the fruit connotes a transmission of power, the nature of which is determined by the flavor of the apple: sweet, bitter, sour, or rotten. Merely taking apples from the tree foretells persecution.

Apricot. The denuded seed, or rotting fruit, foretells travail and threat to the body. The ripe fruit, eaten, is a benefic omen. If merely seen, but not consumed, the dreamt fruit indicates the quashing of present hopes and ambitions.

Artichoke. If seen or eaten in dream, it foretells maiming, loss of life, and mourning.

Ash. A tree whose dream-projection betokens death, funeral rites and mourning. Alternately, it may indicate transition, or a gateway to another place.

Banana. Generally, it is a good omen of fortune, love, romance and happiness.

Barley. To dream of gathering ripe Barley portends success in business or legal undertakings. If the corn is blighted or infected with mildews, this foretells significant loss in such matters. If the corns are green, a long wait or struggle prior to success is foretold. If green corns suddenly ripen, this augury portends an unexpected inheritance. To dream of sheaves of harvested Barley burning foretells famine, plague, or death.

Basil. Dreaming of Basil is widely regarded to be a sinister omen, portending agonies, sorrow, and ruin; especially if the herb is given by another.

Beans. To dream of Beans of any kind portends complications, scandal, meddling, or doom. Gathering or cultivating beans prophesies impending poverty, or at the least a harsh struggle to maintain existence. Burnt beans signify a curse, while growing beanstalks in flower mean that a current wish will be granted.

Blackberry. A dream of brambles is an omen of future discord or trouble. Thorn-pricks portend imminent harm from secret enemies; if blood is drawn, ill business matters are indicated. To pass through a thicket of brambles unharmed signals triumph over enemies; while becoming entangled in them represents an irruption of diabolic power.

Blackthorn. Male mysteries, or the Devil. If the dreamer is punctured by a thorn, emnity or ruination brought on the dreamer by a man. Sloes portend wisdom gained from the land, the secret and noble powers of the countryside. The thorns, or the branches, portend feud and warfare. Burning blackthorn branches bespeak the violation of a spiritual taboo, and a dear price to be paid.

Black Currants. To dream of them prophesies fidelity to lovers, and riches to a merchant or farmer.

Boxwood. Sources are in conflict: some report that dreams of the Box portend despair and dissolution, while others relate it betokens success in marriage.

Branches. If a green branch is dreamt, fortune. If the branch is dead, evil and ruin.

Briars. If wandering amongst them, or entangled within, it foretells enmity and feud. If they are blooming, it augurs too much striving in love.

Cabbage. A malodorous omen in dream. To dream of cutting a Cabbage portends rank jealousy. If, in the dream, the Cabbages are being eaten, this foretells sickness for your loved ones or a loss of money. If cabbages are being picked, collected, or hoarded, it is a sign of the low character of the dreamer, who will soon receive a reckoning at the hands of the gods. Those seen holding or bearing cabbages are revealed as fools, or worthless persons.

Calendula. To dream of the flower portends love and prosperity.

Carrot. To dream of it portends triumph in legal matters, or a sudden windfall, such as an inheritance. Many healthy plants indicate fecundity and prolific childbearing.

Cherry. To dream of unripe or bitter Cherries portends setbacks, disappointments, and inconstancy; many traditions hold that dreaming of cherries augur bane in love and marriage. The stone, or a rotten fruit, augurs interference by malevolent spirits.

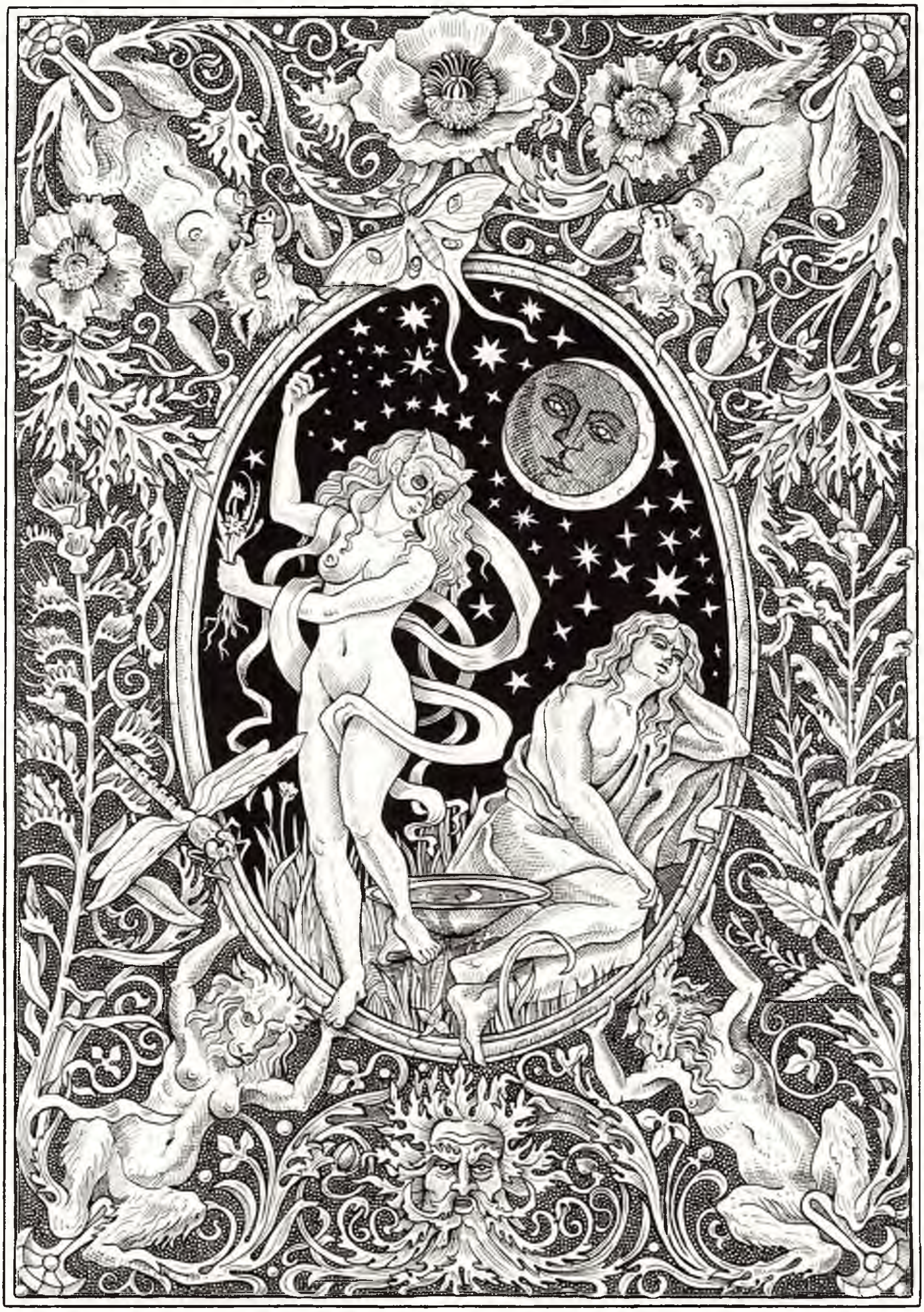
Chestnuts. Dreams of eating the nut prophesy minor strife. If it is the tree which is dreamt, or a grove of them, it signifies assistance form individuals with greater wealth or power than the dreamer. If the dreamer is pricked by a seed capsule, it signifies betrayal of confidences. Roasting the nut foretells cunning and resourcefulness in a present challenge, and eventual triumph. Some sources report dreams of the nut are auspicious for unmarried girls.

Clover. To dream of Clover, either singly or fields thereof, foretells prosperity, dominion and happiness. Dreaming of a field of Red Clover bodes especially well.

Corn or *Grain.* A field of green corn signifies a source of power untapped, a single stalk of ripe corn amid a blighted field portends imminent death or a great culling soon to come. Corn in flower is a positive sign, foretelling expansion and growth of wealth by degree, or the coming of new offspring. If one beholds a field ripening, it betokens the assessment and judgment of one's worldly affairs. Stacks of harvested corn portend an increase of wealth.

Corn Cockle. Deception, infiltration, decay. Surveillance, peeping, harangue by the insane.

Crab Apple. Slow labor toward a profitable outcome.



SUBSUMED IN THE DREAMING THICKET

Cucumber. An herb of pleasing and gentle portent; to dream of Cucumbers is a beneficent augury for sick persons, for it omens a speedy and steady recovery to full health. To the lonely, it forecasts Love; to those in love, it forecasts marriage. To sailors, a dream of Cucumber prophesies a pleasant voyage. To the merchant, the fruit foretells success in trade.

Cypress. Dreaming of a Cypress tree is an assuredly baneful augury; it foretells obstruction and retrogression in business matters, disease, privation, horror, and all such obstreperous malignancies as fall under the dominion of Saturn. If, however, the dreamer is beneath the boughs of the tree at night, or during a storm, it betokens protection of the dreamer by forces ordinary considered malignant.

Dahlia. Frugality, mastering one's resources.

Dandelion. Loss, treachery, misfortune, and duplicitous lovers.

Date. To dream of Date Palm prophesies good fortune, especially when fully flowered or fruited. However, if, in the dream one holds a palm branch, the revelation portends an imminent accusation against you. If the palm frond is gathered in dream, riches and success. The fruit of the date portends many adversaries, if it is date wine which is dreamt of, it augurs the imprisonment or containment of one's enemies.

Dock. Stasis, rootedness, binding.

Ebony. Sorcery, bewitchment, spiritual warfare.

Elderberries. Folk wisdom relates that the appearance of Elderberries in dreams portends imminent sickness, although when dreamt of by women it may betoken an imminent pregnancy.

Fig. According to oneiromancers of old, dreaming of Fig fruits or trees portends long life and riches or the final realization of a previously unmaterialized lifelong dream. Eating Figs, if the fruit is ripe and of wholesome quality, are an especial omen of love and happiness, and a sign of strength for newlyweds, in North African magical traditions, such dreams also augur rain. A Fig marred by rot, insect or worm indicates threat to a marriage.

Fir. The oneiric appearance of the tree, in general, heralds gloom. If, in one's dreams, one finds oneself mid a forest of Firs, this is a sign of suffering soon to come.

Flax. It portends a wife of divine virtue and beauty.

Flowers. Those that bloom out of season are generally of evil omen. Among these, the worst dream-omens are held to be those which bloom white or of a pallid color. Flowers blooming in season, generally, are of an effusive omen, and when glimpsed in a bouquet there is the suggestion of ordering and systematization to the whole.

Forest Fire. Calamity and vexation.

Forget-Me-Not. Agony, heartbreak, unexpected bad tidings.

Gardens. The expansion of mastery in the world, divine patterning.

Gardens, overgrown. False counsel.

Garland. To dream one is wearing a garland indicates prestige and a conference of power upon the dreamer. If the dreamer is fashioning a garland, it means that one's plans shall soon come to fruit. The nature of power is characterized by the type of plants in the garland.

Garlic. A dream of Garlic inside the home is, in general, a favorable omen. To dream of eating the bulb may portend domestic strife or, in some traditions of dream interpretation, deception and the imminent unveiling of secrets.

Geranium. Indecision giving rising to sorrow. Inconstancy in love.

Gooseberry. A cruel or quarrelsome spouse.

Gallows-Tree. It may be seen growing at a crossroads, and with ropes hanging from its limbs to indicate its lethal purpose. Despite its grim suggestion, in dream it augurs unusual good fortune, advancement, and sudden gains. The same is true if a corpse is seen hanging from its boughs, with the added augury of longevity for the dreamer.

Gillyflower. The power to charm others and enchant the spirits.

Gooseberry. Fertility, offspring, successful works. A baneful omen for sailors.

Gourd. Malevolent hauntings. A field of ripening gourds betokens your ancestral spirits' presence, often in judgment, but sometimes to bear witness. If the gourds are broken, rotten, or withered, it signifies abandonment of the dreamer by his or her ancestors.

Grain. Fields, in dreaming, signify the incarnational work, or dharma, of the initiate, the state of the field indicative of the level of mastery, or control, over one's own spirit-progress.

a ploughed field may indicate misfortune; while a field of ripened grain foretells healthy offspring, whether progeny of the flesh or the spirit. Straw and chaff indicate poverty and the squandering of resources. Scattered grain indicates loss, malevolence, and curses upon a bloodline or household. If the grain is infected by rust, evils spirits and poverty.

Granary. If shuttered, temptation, lure, trap. If unshuttered, it represents the connection between the spirit of the dreamer and the collective wisdom of the spirit-world.

Grapes. To dream of the Grapevine portends fertility and prosperity. To dream of eating white grapes portends imminent rainfall. Ripened, sweet grapes taken in delectation augurs great prosperity, whilst eating them out of season means financial struggle. Pressing or trampling grapes indicates victory over enemies. When dreamt by women or girls, ripe grapes are a most positive indicator of love or marriage soon to come. Split or burst grapes bespeak misery and heartbreak. A tradition persists of evil accompanying the sign of the red grape, whether it be eaten or merely beheld in dream.

Grass. if grown high and to seed, poverty, waste, foolhardy habit. If dead, death by disease. If green and of medium height, balance in worldly affairs.

Groves. If a grove is beheld at a distance, it means imminent and certain dominion, whether of a good or evil type; its chief feature is its inevitability and overwhelming power. If one finds oneself within a twilit grove, this is often the inception of a prophetic dream or nightmare. Fully-leaved groves indicate powerful connections to the spirit world; groves barren of leaves indicate opprobium and evil.

Hazel. The finding of Hazelnuts in a dream-auguries the imminent discovery of treasure. The nuts, when eaten in dream, portend a spiritual ordeal or trial, which may culminate in triumph or defeat.

Harvest. An increase in fortune, and the betterment of life.

Hawthorn. Feminine mystery, tree-spirits, *nymphai.* If the skin is punctured by a thorn, enmity or ruination brought on the dreamer by a woman.

Hay. To dream of gathering and storing it, good fortune. To behold it scattered, or to sell it augurs malfeasance, danger, and accidents. Rotting hay betokens foul relations and deceit.

Heathland. Desolation and despair. If dried up, ruination.

Hedge. Protection from danger. If one hides oneself amongst the hedge, trouble with enemies.

Honey. When eaten, it signifies increase, success, and advancement in station and understanding. In the hive with bees, it speaks of communion with preternatural forces. In some dream-traditions, a dream of eating honey betokens food stolen by oneself, or another.

Hops. If dreamt by a man, a sudden increase in wealth; if dreamt by a woman, true love and many children are augured.

Horseradish. Quarreling and strife. Its acrid smell, like coffee, is one of the more readily perceived odors in dream, and augurs impending violence.

Holly. Obstruction, opposition, and challenge, especially if one is pricked by the leaves. If one beholds the tree, or stands beneath its branches, enemies or malevolent forces pay you respect, and allow you passage without harm. If one gathers the red berries, it shows the sign of bloodshed during the course of warfare or a struggle. If one dreams of gathering leaves, it is a sign of the benediction of Mars, and an especially powerful omen if the dreamer is a soldier.

Hyssop. To dream of the sweet-scented herb portends loyal, rewarding alliances.

Ivy. Generally, the plant is regarded by dream interpreters as a sign of parasitism, evil and poverty. In this modality of interpretation, to dream of Ivy covering a house indicates the destruction of a family or their finances. Similarly of one dreams of a statue covered with Ivy, one will suffer a scandal. However, if the dreamer is a witch, criminal, or heretic, to dream of thriving vines on a house portends prosperity for its occupants, likewise fame and power when seen growing on a statue.

Jasmine. To dream of Jasmine foretells new love and erotic satisfaction.

Juniper. Dreaming of the tree is a mixed and unsettled omen, tending toward evil. The berries portend good fortune, frugality, and wise management of resources.

Lavender. Ambiguity in love and friendship, the augury counsels caution.

Lemons. Spirits of death and disease shall plague family relations.

Laurel. Glory, nobility, dominion, victory. Of the leaves and branches, the securing and safeguarding of one's own dominion. If the tree is denuded of leaves, or diseased, demonic possession. A Laurel crown betokens honour and reward, but if one dreams of gathering Laurel leaves, it means that the reward is sought without justification, and shall not come.

Leek. Strife in the community.

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Lemons. Some dream interpretation books relay that the appearance of the Lemon in dream portends a souring of friendship, love, and alliances.

Lentils. If seen or eaten, futility or foolish pursuits. If they are scattered, it foretells the division of allies and lovers.

Lettuce. To dream of eating it foretells the gradual unraveling of control over one's life.

Lily of the Valley. According to the ninth-century Dream Manual of Ibn Qutaybah, a dream of Lily of the Valley portends evil soon to befall the dreamer.

Lily. Generally, virtue, revelation, purity of transmission. To dream of Lilies blooming in season foretells marriage and prosperity. If they bloom out of season, or if, in the dream, they are withered, this is an ominous omen, indicating the imminent death or illness of a loved one.

Maize. Tall plants indicate dominion and influence, while flowering plants betoken a child soon to be born. If it is the kernels which appear, sorcery.

Mallows. Equilibrium, healing, convalescence, restoration of joy after sorrow.

Marigold. Dreams of the flower portend a happy marriage, wealth, and every success in life. If the dream reveals severed flower heads, or the petals strewn about, a death will soon follow.

Mandrake. The appearance of a stranger with significant news to impart, success in court. To dream of harvesting the root indicates a brush with death. Severed portions of an anthropomorphic root relate to power—functional or dysfunctional—concentrated in the corresponding body part of the Dreamer.

Meadow. To dream of standing in a flowering meadow indicates the blessings of Venus and the Host of Eros, with true love augured.

Medlar. If barren, the tree indicates foul consequences of the dreamer's irresponsibility. If fruited, wealth.

Melons. Excellent physical health, fertility, longevity.

Mistletoe. Its berries betoken male virility, or, if eaten in the context of the dream, wisdom derived from poison. If the dreamer is crowned with Mistletoe, it signifies a great preternatural power in the waking, such as prophecy, Second Sight, or the healing touch. Mistletoe seen in the boughs of an Oak indicates strength in battle, while if seen in an Apple tree it augurs skill and cunning. If the Mistletoe is dead, or found lying on the ground, it foretells a 'bleeding out' of power, death, or mourning.

Moss. Divine patternings; revelation of hidden design. Moss on a skull signifies power from an ancestral spirit.

Mulberry. The fruit and the tree portend, in general, increase. It is especially a dreaming ally of women, indicating success in undertakings of love, family, career, and trade.

Mushrooms. Old age. Alternately it signifies aid, power or wealth given to the dreamer by an aged person. If the mushroom is infested with worms, excruciating physical suffering.

Mustard. The Devil, or infernal forces, especially when the root is prominent. Swollen seed pods connote vanity, while the dehisced pod foretells destruction of one's reputation. Scattered seed tells of falsehood and ruin.

Myrtle. To dream of Myrtle portends many lovers, and satisfaction and bounty in the erotic realms. It may also forecast a sudden inheritance or windfall. If a married person dreams of Myrtle, it portends a second marriage. The Dream Manual of Ibn Qutaybah, a text on Islamic dream interpretation, associates dreams of Myrtle with fidelity and enduring love. A crown of Myrtle betokens marriage soon to come.

Narcissus. Fleeting love or desire.

Nettle. If, in one's dreams, one is chastised by the sting of the Nettle, it foretells frustration and disappointment. To gather Nettles in a dream indicates that an important person has formed a favorable impression of you.

Nutmeg. Instability, fluctuation, imminent changes.

Nuts. If beheld ripe and in good quantity, they augur riches, but if one dreams of gathering nuts, wasted effort is foretold.

Oak. A stately tree in good health generally portends longevity and riches for the dreamer. The Dream-borne Oak frequently stands at the crossroads of many spirit-currents, where its association with doors allows passage between diverse states of knowledge. In general, confronting a standing tree portends a test, as is generally administered by a locked door. Dreaming of standing within a hollow Oak indicates access to the spirit world, or to many previously closed routes of power. A tree whose branches are fully fruited with acorns is a fine augury, portending wealth. To dream of a thriving oak promises male children who will win distinction. An Oak rotted or struck by lightning portends death. Acorns confer great power and wisdom, especially if given to the dreamer as a gift, yet other traditions maintain that an acorn appearing in dream may betoken serious illness to come. A dead or rotten Oak foretells the death of a friend or relative.

Oats. If the field is tall, happiness. If cut down, misery and misfortune are to come.

Olive. To dream of olives—the fruit of the tree—portends fortune and plenty. To dream of a mature Olive tree portends victory over one's enemies. Destruction of, or violence against an Olive tree signifies imminent betrayal.

Onions. In dream, onions betoken the revelation of secrets. To dream of uprooting an onion and eating it is a sign of impending death. According to the oneiromantic writings of St. Nicephorus, to dream of onions or leeks portends sorrow and mourning.

Oranges. Despite their alignment with classical goddesses of love, beauty and pleasure, their presence in dream is generally held to be a maledictive omen, usually portending imminent disease or a downward stroke of fortune.

Orchard. Dreaming of oneself in an orchard indicates a great legacy or inheritance. If the orchard is dead, debt.

Palm. The appearance of Palm tree in a dream, especially those fully loaded with flowers or fruits, foretells good things to come. However, if in the dream you are holding a branch of the Palm, there will be an imminent accusation against you.

Parsley. To dream of cutting Parsley is a bad omen; the dreamer will be 'crossed in love.' Devonshire lore holds that transplanting parsley is bad luck, and either the offender or his family will be severely punished within the year.

Parsnip. Gradual strengthening of fortune, modest inheritance.

Peaches. Dreaming of them foretells good health and a contented life. Some sources connect its shape and color to gold, and an increase in great fortune.

Pear. It signifies rejuvenation, after a long period of dormancy, stasis or disease. It also portends fecundity, and, in some instances, resurrection. A dream of an unripe pear portends hardship, obstacle and lean means; if the pear is ripe, a degree of prosperity. A baked pear signifies entrepreneurial success, while a Pear fruit destroyed by insects means that you have been cheated by someone formerly thought to be an ally.

Peas. Wealth. Raw peas signify an unsettled state in interpersonal affairs and alliances. Dry, shriveled seeds connote worthlessness of the same.

Peppers. Great intelligence, either in one's children or future beloved. A split, burst or rotten pepper indicates wrath giving way to great loss and suffering.

Pine. The tree betokens separation, decay, and death. If the cone or nut, healing and restoration from privation is augured.

Plum. If ripe fruit, ease. If withered, infection and depredation. According to some schools of classical dream-divination, dreaming of the tree foretells infidelity, disease, impoverishment or other disaster. A tree filled with many fruits suggests you have many enemies.

Pomegranate. If ripe, fertility and increase; the realization of wealth which has previously been held in potential. If split or dehisced, trouble in childbirth. If rotten, disease of the reproductive organs. According to the oneiromantic oracles of St. Nicephorus, the 9th century Patriarch of Constantinople, to dream of eating pomegranates portends imminent disease.

Primrose. Imbalance, discord, illness and madness. Sometimes it may betoken succumbing to personal delusion.

Pumpkin. A field of pumpkins denotes many benefactors. Eating pumpkin prophesies imminent misfortune.

Quince. In the ninth-century Dream Manual of Ibn Qutaybah, a dream of Quince portends an imminent journey. Other traditions hold that it betokens contenteness in domestic life, a happy marriage and good family fortune.

Radish. As with many plants having a swollen underground corm or bulb, it traditionally foretells the imminent revelation of a secret.

Raisins. If scattered, a quarrel is suggested. If they are shared among several people, the mending of ways which were previously broken.

Raspberry. The fruiting vine tells of success in your current undertakings, as well as affirming the presence of allies unknown to you. Good news will soon arrive from far away, or the lasting affections of a beloved.

Red Currant. A positive omen, affairs in balance, fidelity in love.

Resin or Pitch. If seen or smelled, fixation or stoppage of leaks. If one is smeared with it, scandal or damage to reputation.

Roots. If they entangle or constrain the dreamer, it signifies an ordeal of magical power, or a sudden transformation of the spirit. If they grow from the body, a blessing is given by the spirits of the damned.

Rose. To dream of Rose is one of the finest omens, portending love, happiness, fortune, and success in many endeavors, and it is favored by many dream prognosticators as a transcendent symbol. However, to dream of a withered rose is an omen of malignancy; it portends decay of the household and ruined fortunes. Red roses portend joy and amorous tidings; white warns of imminent death and mourning. Thorns of the Rose indicate a 'necessary evil.' Faded or wilted roses indicate a missed opportunity.

Rosemary. To see or hold it is a good sign portending advancement in station. If the plant's aroma is perceived, it signifies mourning.

Saffron. Windfall, miracle, and the grace of all gods. A sign of rarity and precious resource.

Strawberries. If they are seen or eaten, good marriage, fortune and health. If plants covered with many ripe fruits are dreamt, it signifies an increase in fame, and many new friends. Large berries connote envy.

Sunflower. Humiliation, or eclipse of personal importance.

Sycamore. The dream-omen of the Sycamore is, in general, one of new love. If the dreamer has a mate, the tree portends the loss of the spouse and the coming of new love; if the dreamer is unattached, a new lover is soon to appear.

Tamarinds. Evil news, manipulation, bad associations.

Thistle. If, in one's dreams, one stands amid a patch of Thistle, it is an omen of high fortune, and portends the coming of delightful and extraordinary events. If the Thistles infiltrate a field or garden, it indicates laziness, or a lack of vigilance in the face of danger.

Thorns. When seen on a tree, they stand as a warning of imminent threat or harm. If beheld separate from the tree, the are the essence of malediction. If the flesh of the dreamer is pierced or punctured by thorns, it means enemies, affliction and bankruptcy.

Tobacco. If the living plant is encountered, an intercession of power for the Dreamer. If smoked, temporal power or pleasure. Scattering the leaves augurs intercession by the gods and angels. Among the Lacandon Maya, dreams of tobacco signify encounters with serpents.

Trees, barren. A sign of the proximity of the dead.

Trees, felled. If you dream of cutting trees, it foretells financial desperation and economic ruin.

Trees, fruited. Temptation, opportunity, or both.

Tulip. Pleasure, the favor of Venus, many lovers.

Turnip. Embarrassment, slander, libel. The irruption of a previously concealed scandal.

Vines consuming masonry. Oppression, ruin, rottenness, disease.

Vineyards. Riches, the manifestation of hidden design.

Violet. To dream of Violets foretells a windfall or an advancement or promotion. If seen blooming and attached to the plant, it signifies hidden or buried truths coming to light which, though they are malefic in their concealed state, become benefic with their revelation. If flower-blossoms are seen apart from the plant, it foretells the emergence of previously hidden allies. Where roots assume the form of faces, it is the sign an ancestral wisdom.

Walnut. According to some dream interpretation traditions, walnuts within a dream imply unfaithfulness in relationships. The tree may also augur a struggle, overcoming travail. The nut indicates success in spiritual endeavors, or the discovery of treasure.

Wheat. Dream of a field indicates successful realization of visions. If one dreams of flour, striving and attainment is indicated, though a wholly material reward: technical obsession, skill withouy heart, miserly ways.

White Currants. Evil, malevolence, infection.

Willow. In general, treachery and duplicity amongst close associates. If the dream is of a dead or rotting tree, or a Willow stump, it foretells betrayal by persons of low character. To dream of mourning beneath a Willow tree foretells the arrival of good news.

Wine. If it is poured out, it betokens the spilling of blood. If one drinks wine of good quality, it predicts wealth.

Wormwood. To dream of the herb or its extracted juices is a splendid, beneficent omen. To dream of a field of Wormwood betokens a great bounty of the spirit-realm soon to manifest.

Yarrow. To dream of Yarrow is generally regarded as a beneficent omen.

Yew. Dreaming of a Yew tree signifies imminent death of an acquaintance, from which the dreamer will derive benefit. The passing of power, inheritance, and legacy.

Lemon Verbena

Aloysia triphylla

Verbenaceæ (Verbena Family)

ALSO known as Limonetto, Lemon Verbena is a perennial shrub growing to 3 meters in height with lanceolate leaves bearing a strong lemon fragrance. Its inflorescence is composed of small white or purple flowers. It is indigenous to South America, but now widely established in Europe and elsewhere. The leaves are the most fragrant portion of the plant, and the part used in perfumery, culinary arts, aromatherapy and magic.

Its primary planetary resonance is with Mercury and its occult powers are Marriage, Glamours, Partnership, Allure, Protection from Noxious Spirits, and Fertility. Draja Mickaharic notes that the plant is used as a spiritual potentiator, added to increase the power of a magical operation. The leaves, due to their bright scent and apotropaic associations, are an excellent strewing herb, especial when torn in the act. A bundle of leaves hung over the bed, or added to sleep pillows, will chase bothersome nightmares and other nocturnal hauntings.

In southern Italy, women wishing to conceive drunk the tea as a magical medicament. Peruvian folk magic uses tea brewed from the leaves to treat depression, and the seeds are valued for their potency against 'bad air', illnesses with a spiritual or magical cause. In Réunion, the plant is used to expel evil spirits.

Lignum Aloes

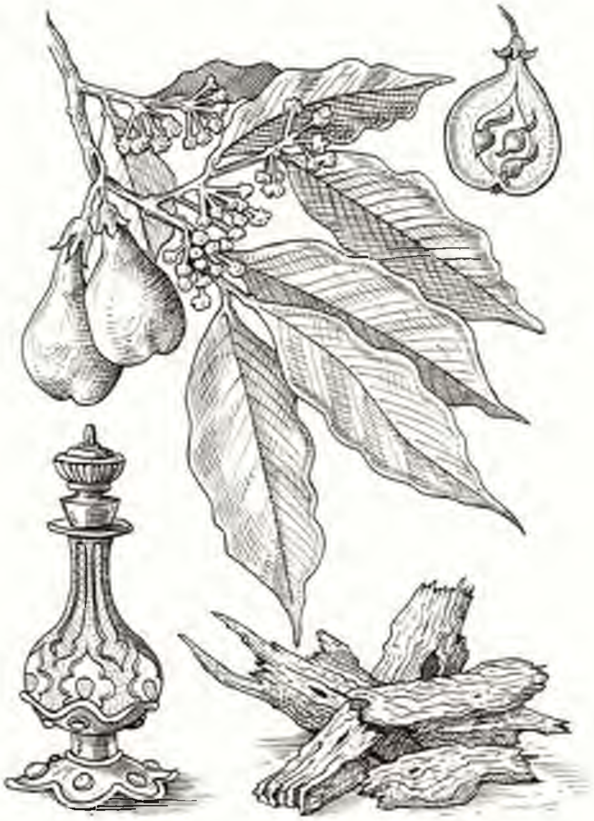
Aquilaria agallocha

Thymelaeaceæ (Mezereum Family)

A TROPICAL tree with eaglewing-shaped branches, native to the rain forests of Southeast Asia and Indonesia, from which a fragrant wood is harvested for incense. *Aquilaria* is often infected by parasitic fungi such as *Aspergillus* or *Fusarium* species; indeed, it is often the more thoroughly parasitized trees which produce the most fragrant wood for commerce. The portion of the plant used is the fragrant wood or resin, well-ground into a fine powder. The aromatic virtue of these products varies considerably from tree to tree, and most of the best-quality material is exported to Japan for the complex and much-loved Koh-Doh incense ceremonies. Additionally, the rare and precious Oud Absolute offers a superior aromatic fraction of the plant.

Medicinally, its action upon the body is stimulant, nervine, antimicrobial, digestive, aphrodisiac, and anodyne. Fine-quality Aloeswood is prescribed in Chinese medicine for stagnant *Qi* conditions, this usage aligned with its planetary resonance with Mars, according to the ancient Doctrine of Signatures.

A modern Arabian welcoming-ritual of ancient pedigree involves sprinkling guests with Rose water and burning fragrant Aloeswood. According to the Apocryphal *Gospel of Nicodemus*, Lignum Aloes were one of the funereal spices employed to embalm Christ. In Moroccan funerary custom, Agal wood is used to fumigate the corpse. The wood is also occasionally fashioned into ceremonial beads.



LITANY OF NAMES

Agallochum
Agaloxon
Agilla Wood
Agal
Agar Wood
Aguru

Ahaloth
Eaglewood
Lignaloes
Oud
Ud
Chén Xiāng
Jinkoh
Lignum Aquillariæ
Paradise Wood
Wood Aloe

The dust has been utilized in the high magical operations of Europe, Asia and the Near East for millennia, prized for its beguiling scent when smoldered and its profound abilities as an aromatic catalyst. Certain medieval incenses aligned with the planetary power of Jupiter were based on Aloeswood and it appears in innumerable suffumigant formulæ. Lignum Aloes possesses the remarkable virtue of *potentiation*, whereby it may be added to existing magical preparations to magnify their powers in compound; it also commands this property in aromatics, whereby it magnifies and enriches the scents of those materials with which it is commingled. One old recipe for a Solar incense is as follows:

Aloes Wood	36 grains	Myrrh	1 oz
Yellow Amber	½ oz	Frankincense	1 oz
Liquid Balsam	34 grains	Berries of Lawrell	34 grains
Blood of a Lapwing	½ drachm	Musk	12 grains

The *Munich Handbook*, a medieval Bavarian grimoire of spirit-conjuration, contains a procedure for creating a magical speculum called The Mirror of Floron. Made of highly polished steel, the mirror is to be smeared with "pure and bright balsam" and fumigated with a mixture of Aloes, Ambergris, Myrrh, and White Frankincense. During the rite, the familiar spirit of Floron appears in the form of a knight on horseback, dismounts his steed, and then proceeds to answer questions concerning what will come to pass in the future.

When burning pure Lignum Aloes, smoulder the dust or wood shavings by way of a low heat, rather than directly on a block of charcoal. Its delicate caramel scent will otherwise be rendered foul or destroyed utterly. An appropriate vessel for smoldering may be created by filling a clay or bronze vessel with ash. A small hole is excavated in the center, at the bottom of which a lit charcoal is placed. The hole is then covered with a thin chip of mica, atop which a sliver of the wood, or ground dust, may then be heated. Specialized Japanese incense-burning kits can sometimes be found in import shops with ready-made apparatus. Quality is also a factor. In Japan there are a host of differing grades of Aloes Wood, bearing descriptive qualities as "elegant and dignified" and "rough and boorish like a farmer."

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Summoning, Beneficence, Potentiation, Attraction, Love, Ward against Fascination, Consecration.
Planets: Mars, Venus, Jupiter.
Element: Earth, Water.
Deific Forms: Garuda.
Ritual Action: Entreaty.
Body Part: Sensorium.
Therapeutic: Restoration of Homeostasis.
Affliction: Parasitism.
Emblem: A winged hand, appearing from a cloud of smoke, gesturing skyward.

LILY

Lilium spp.
Lilaceæ (Lily Family)

CHRISTIAN folklore relates that the Lily is accurst because it was the one flower in the Garden of Gethsemane who would not bow its head as the agonized Christ passed by. Such dignity is only proper for this noble blossom, for in some occult traditions traditions it is considered sacred to Lilith, ancient storm demon, spirit-mother of witches and sorcerers, and the first Eve who rejected the domination of Adam.

Lilies are perennials endemic to the temperate Northern Hemisphere, growing from 0.3 to 1.25 meters in height. They are conspicuous by their iconic six-petaled flowers, a wide variety of naturally occurring colors across diverse species, as well as a profusion of delicious fragrances. These alluring attributes have been further encouraged by plant breeders, and Lilies are predictably prized by humans as a garden ornamental. They possess subterranean bulbs, from which true roots extend, often aventitious. The common name 'Lily' may also sometimes refer to plants whose flower resemble Lilies but are genetically unrelated. The genus *Lilium* of True Lilies presently contains about 110 accepted species, this number having diminished over the years with many former plants reassigned to other genera.

The flower and root are the portions most often used. In folk medicine, there has been limited use of certain species, mostly as a nutritive, though some North American species such as *Lilium canadense* are therapeutically potent and have served as abortifacients or as regulators of the menstrual cycle. Poultices from the ground bulbs have also been used externally to treat ulcers, boils, and tumors. The bulbs are valued traditional foodstuffs, as are the unopened flower buds of some species. Across southern Siberia, wild bulbs of *L. martagon* were foraged as a traditional food; in North America, similar traditional culinary usage was made of Tiger Lily (*L. columbianum*), Panther Lily (*L. pardalinum*) and Wood Lily (*L. philadeplphicum*).

Several pseudo-Lilies such as Lily of the Valley (*Convallaria majalis*) contain toxins. More venomous is the Belladonna Lily, *Amaryllis belladonna*, which contains the alkaloid bellamerine, which can incept death by respiratory paralysis. The Hottentots of Africa used extracts of the bulb of this plant as arrow-poison.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF LILY

Devotion, Rapture, Grace, Innocence, Affection, Refulgence, Glamour, Apotheosis, Metemsomatosis, Glory, Divine Maidenhood, Argent Lunation, & Corporeal Reconstitution.

Lily is governed by the Moon, particularly that Lunar quality of mesmeric captivation, whether of a sexual nature or simply holding the gaze in thrall. Its magical powers are Allure, Protection from Maleficia, Hex-Breaking, House Ward, and as a funerary oblation. The flower has long been associated with the concept of Purity, though this has often solely been explained as chastity. Rather, the Purity of the Lily relates to unadulterated concentration of power, and to the virtue of innocence, being free of contamination. This purity informs its power of protection against despoiling influences.

Lily also has some tradition as a love-charm, and some Santeria spells employ the flower to secure marriage. A formula for an anointing oil is found in the 18th century grimoire *Petit Albert* and was used as a love charm for men, is compounded of the ashes of Day Lily (*Hemerocallis* spp.), along with civet oil and St. Johns wort. One hour prior to courtship, the oil was used to anoint the big toe of the left foot and the lower back. Although the portion the plant is not specified, one may prepare the ashes from the dried flowers, leaves or root.

> If thou wilt gather this hearb (ye sun being in the Signe of the Lyon) and mixe it with the juice of the laurel or Bay tree and afterward then put that juice under the dung of cattel a certaine time, it shall be turned into wormes, of the which, if powder be made, and put about the neck of any man or in his cloathes, he shal never sleepe, nor be able to sleepe untill it be away.
>
> *The Secrets of Albertus Magnus*

In times past, the plant was hung on doors or the fronts of houses on St. John's Eve to protect against malefic sorcery. Many, however, would not suffer Lilies in the house, as they were thought to attract death-spirits. Other lore-streams consider the Lily appropriate for the garden, as they form a natural *barrier* to ghosts.

An ancient Coptic spell for creating a magical Ring of Hermes involves submerging the ring in an ointment of Lilies for three days, as well as lavishing burnt offerings of Kyphi and Myrrh, and sacrficing fresh fruits in season. Though the kind of Lily is not specified, it may be Water Lily (*Nymphaea* spp.), a plant belonging to a completely different botanical family than True Lilies.

> Cagliostro was the agent of the Templars, and therefore wrote to the Free-Masons of London that the time had come to begin the work of re-building the Temple of the Eternal. He had introduced into Masonry a new Rite called the *Egyptian*, and endeavored to resusitate the mysterious worship of Isis. The three letters L\P\D\ on his seal were the initials of the words "*Lilia pedibus destrue*;" *tread underfoot the Lilies* [of France], and a Masonic medal of the 16th or 17th century has upon it a sword cutting off the stalk of a Lily, and the words "*Talum dabit ultio messem*," *such harvest revenge will give*."
>
> ALBERT PIKE
> *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry*, 1871

The Lily is aligned with the grave, mourning, resurrection and other concepts relating to transmigration; the flower serves as an emblem of transcendence of the soul after death. In European funerary tradition, Lily flowers were used for the graves of children and virgins. The flower is also found engraved on medieval Christian tombs, including Templar graves in Israel.

> *But the golden Lily and Crocus, together with the Asphodel, retain the old Greeks fondest thoughts—they are the only "golden" flowers that are to burn on the trees and float on the streams of paradise.*
>
> JOHN RUSKIN
> *The Queen of the Air*, 1883

In the modern occult tradition of Sabbatic Witchcraft, the Lily is allied with the spirit Liliya, a syncretism of Lilith, the ancient demoness, and Mary, Mother of God. Aligned with both fertility and death, she is considered the ancestral mother of witches, and presides over the temporal moment of midnight. The pale flower is emblematic both of her pale, alluring flesh and the color of bone in her guise as corpse-queen. Standing at the crossroad of the living and dying, she embodies the simultaneous powers of sexual allure and physical destruction, and the arcana governing night and darkness.

LILY OF THE VALLEY

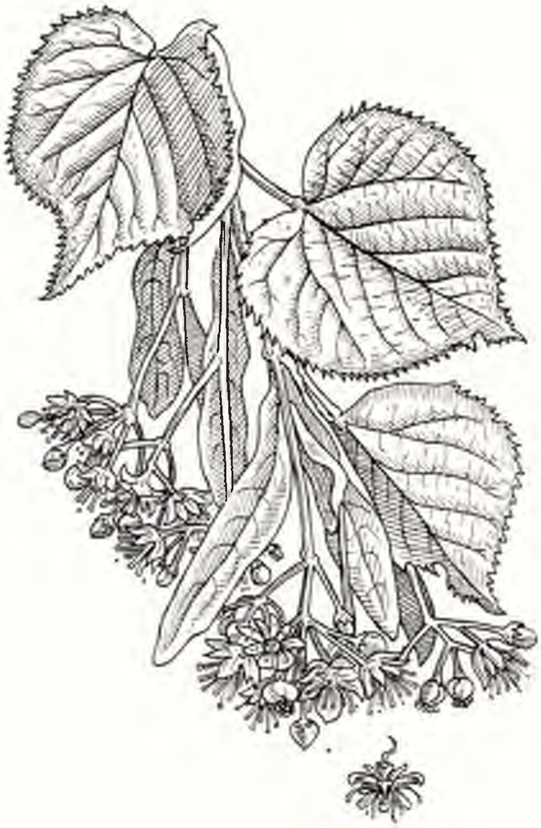
Convallaria majalis
Lilaceæ (Lily Family)

A HARDY PERENNIAL herb to one half meter in height, often found under cultivation, with a creeping, jointed, pungent-scented rhizome bearing stems of 2–3 lanceolate stalked leaves and drooping, cream-colored bell-shaped flowers. The blossoms, as they mature, give rise to shiny red berries. Lily of the Valley inhabits temperate regions of the Northern Hemisphere, showing marked preferences for Oak and Beech woodlands.

The flowering stalks and rhizome are the parts used. The fragrant essential oil, due to the difficulty of extraction, is exceedingly rare, with many perfumers substituting an artificially compounded Lily of the Valley oil. An astringent, whitening skin wash called *Aqua Aurea* is made from distilled flower-water.

Medicinally the plant is antihypertensive and nervine. Convallaria regulates erratic heartbeat in a similar, but safer, fashion to Foxglove. Poisoning is characterized by dilated pupils, delirium, and cardiac arrest. Cases of poisoning are generally limited to children who have eaten the visually appealing berries. In common with Hellebore, Lily of the Valley contains significant concentrations of cardenolide glycosides that arrest the heart.

Convallaria is allied with the planetary virtues of Mercury, and Ostara, Norse goddess of the Spring, was one ancient patron of the flower. Generally, its occult properties are Protection, Allure, and Coercion. In German folk magic, both cattle and milk were bewitched by burying Lily of the Valley under the threshold of the stall. Curiously, the plant was used for the opposite effect in Albanian and Macedonian traditions. *Convallaria majalis* held esteem as an amulet for protection of the home and livestock, and was considered especially efficacious on St. George's Day (May 6).



LINDEN

Tilia spp.
Tiliaceæ (Linden Family)

A TREE loving alkaline soil, Linden grows to a height of 40 meters, and is native to Europe and North America. It has finely dentate heart-shaped leaves, and tiny, fragrant yellow flowers. The two European species of note are *T. cordata* and *T. platyphyllos*; these two hybridize as *Tilia × europæa*. As a bee forage, Linden blossoms are considered to produce one of the finest honeys, little of which becomes available on the common market.

> *As the bee is drawn by the Linden bloom,*
> *My heart is drawn by thee.*
> SLAVONIAN FOLKSONG

The portions used for magic and medicine are the leaves, flowers, twigs, and inner bark. Its actions upon the human body are antispasmodic, sedative, nervine, emollient, digestive, diaphoretic, hypotensive, vasodilator. Linden flowers may be infused into a tea for treating restlessnes, fevers, and persistent dry coughs. Large amounts of flower tea of some Linden species taken internally may cause heart damage; externally, the leaves may be used as a skin tonic. A decoction of the leaves and flowers has long been valued as a soothing bath, a use by which the Tree's nervine powers are amply demonstrated.

In classic planetary correspondence, Linden is ruled chiefly by Jupiter and Venus, but also the Moon. Its occult powers are Love, Allure, Protection from Maleficia, and Fetishes. Linden wood is soft, finely textured, and versatile for carving; its pale color reflects the tree's ethereal and otherworldly nature. Basswood or American Linden (*Tilia americana*), also known as American Linden, is valued for its hard but light wood.

The Spirit-Retinue of Linden

Preeminence, Sophistication, Majesty, Dignity,
Elevation, Integrity, Respite, Beckoning,
Forbearance, Mercy, Mesmeric
Allure, Nuptial Blessing,
and Wanton
Carnality.

Herodotus documented the use of the tree in the divinitory practices of the cross-dressing *enareis*, the 'man-woman' priests of the ancient Scythians. Taking the inner bark of the Linden, they divided it into three pieces, then proceeded to plait and unplait it with their fingers, whilst uttering their prophecies. The oracles proceeded directly from their amatory goddess Agrimpassa.

An ancient Teutonic belief considered the Linden to be a tree of justice; some magistrates sat beneath its whispering boughs when passing judgement. The seldom-glimpsed tree-spirits known in Germany as the *Weisse Frauen*, or White Ladies, are known to frequent groves of Linden. The witches of Pommerania were said to gather in the branches of Linden trees, as well as those of Maple, Ash, and various nut trees.

Among the Teutons of old, the Linden was regarded as the haunt of elves, faeries, and dragons; one tradition of protective magic specified planting the tree in front of a dwelling to prevent the entry of malefic sorcerers. Around Easter time, Wallachian Gypsies carry a piece of Linden wood as a charm against Dina, "queen of evil spirits".

In some regions of Europe, Linden was planted extensively in cemeteries.

In Italy, the leaves of Large-leaf Linden (*T. platyphllos*) are used as a bath to protect the bather against the Evil Eye. In Poland the tree enjoyed apotropaic use, particularly against witches on Midsummer Night.

LION'S TAIL

Leonotis leonurus

Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

UMUNYANE, Dagga, *Herba Leonuri* or Lion's Tail is a hardy perennial to 2 meters, native to southern Africa, with bright clusters of hirsute, whorled orange flowers, much resembling the plant's namesake. It is easily grown as a handsome garden specimen, especially in Mediterranean climates.

The portions used are the flowers, leaves, roots, and dried stems with seedpods. In folk medicine, it is emmenagogue and purgative: traditional healers in South Africa utilize a decoction of the leaves and flowers for both internal and external complaints, including athsma. As a traditional treatment for snakebite, the plant was crushed together with a snake head and applied to the wound. The plant's properties may be readily extracted via alcohol into tincture form, and the leaves and flowers may be quickly air dried and stored.

When the dried leaves are smoked, one experiences physical effects of placidity, relaxation, euphoria, and slight drowsiness. These effects are in part incepted by the pseudoalkaloid leonurine ($C_{14}H_{21}N_3O_5$), currently under scientific investigation for antidepressant and anticonvulsant activity.

In planetary correspondence it is aligned with the Sun and Mercury; its elemental character is ordered by Fire. Its magical properties are Benediction, Charisma, Vigor, and Wealth.

The related species Lion's Ear (*Leonotis nepetifolia*), a hardy shrub native to tropical Africa and naturalized in the Americas, is somewhat larger, reaching a height of 3 meters. Its leaves are oval and serrate with whorls of red-orange flowers. In the Sudan, the root of the plant is a valued amulet against evil spirits, and a fumigation of the aerial portions is also used against the Evil Eye. In the Brazilian religion of Candomblé, the plant is sacred to Xangô, loud and forceful *orisha* of thunder and lightning.

LIQUORICE

Glycyrrhiza glabra

Fabaceæ (Pea Family)

THERE are 14 species in the Liquorice genus *Glycyrrhiza*, consisting of shubby herbs to 2 meters in height, being hardy of habit, native to the Mediterranean, Southern Europe and Asia. It has pinnate leaves, with blue to white flowers, and seeds borne in a pod. The sweet root is the portion valued in medicine and magic.

Its most usual influences on the body are as apertif, digestive, expectorant, and laxative, and it possesses virtue in folk medicine as an anti-inflammatory. The root is used to provide natural sweetening in herbal teas, and also has a characteristic flavor, though it not as strong as that of the unrelated Anise, with which Liquorice is commonly confused. There is some evidence to suggest the roots have a mild aphrodisiac effect on women; in Chinese medicine Liquorice is considered liminal between yin and yang, and used in some formulae to correct conditions of aberrant *qi*. Excess liquorice consumption can cause a number of health problems due to the presence of glycyrrhizic acic ($C_{42}H_{62}O_{16}$). Nonetheless, the plant is under increasing scrutiny in pharmaceutical reseach for possible antitumor activity.

In planetary correspondence, Licorice is most commonly ascribed the powers of Jupiter. Magically, it is used in charms of Fidelity, Love, and Attraction. In various streams of Asian magic, Liquorice drives away evil spirits, and in some systems of medicine and magic, the plant has enjoyed repute as a counterpoison.

A Potion to Make a Man Sleep for Two Days

ADAPTED FROM A RECIPE IN THE LEYDEN PAPYRUS

℄ Pound the following in ½ liter of wine:

Mandrake Root	25 g
Liquorice	25 g
Ivy	25 g
Henbane	25 g

LIVERWORT

Anemone hepatica

Ranunculaceæ (Buttercup Family)

LIVERWORT is an attractive low-growing herbaceous perennial to 15 cm, native to woodlands in North America, Asia and Europe. It leaves and the flowers are white, pink, blue, lavender or pale purple; its leaves are three-lobed, and through the Doctrine of Signatures this lobed geometry signified resonance with the human liver, afflictions of which it was used to treat. In botany, its former binomial was *Hepatica nobilis*, and it bore the common name Herba Trinitas.

In accord with the virtues of the planets, Liverwort is aligned with Jupiter and its dominion of power; its magical properties are Love, Lust, Allure and Protection. In North America, the root was esteemed as a love-bewitchment by Iroquois women, who chewed it to sway the affections of men. Other love-charms used a powder of the roots, cast or blown upon the object of one's affections.

Dried leaves of Liverwort, also ground into a powder, have been employed as a love charm among some Native Americans. The Cherokee used it as a sacred emetic for driving away night-haunting spirits, especially snakes. Roots of the plant were esteemed as a powerful hunting-medicine by the Chippewa and were used to charm traps.

LOBELIA

Lobelia spp.

Campanulaceæ (Bellflower Family)

AN ANNUAL or biennial herb, with alternate toothed leaves and loose spikes of flowers appearing in July and August. The genus *Lobelia* comprises some 380 species, many of them featuring stunning floral displays, and many can be grown in the garden as ornamentals. As considered from the realms of magic and ethnomedicine, the type species is known by the common name of Indian Tobacco (*L. inflata*). The leaves and flowering tops are the parts used. Lobelias are frequently grown in gardens, and a large variety of ornamental cultivars are available.

In the human body it presents varied actions, including that of a vaso-motor stimulant, diaphoretic, expectorant, and emetic. When smoked it behaves as a narcotic stimulant, and Devil's Lobelia (L. *tupa*) is used this manner by the Mapuche peoples of Chile. Taken orally, the herb can be a violent emetic, the use of which is accompanied by giddiness, headache, and stupor. Various species of *Lobelia* have been employed by Native Americans as cures for syphilis.

Its principle alkaloid is the pyridine known as lobeline ($C_{22}H_{27}NO_2$), but it also contains lobelimidine, nor-lobedimidine, and isolobinine, as well as chelidonic acid. Symptoms of Lobelia poisoning include derangement of vision, nausea, vomiting, tremors, coma, and death. Despite these toxic potentials, various *Lobelia* species are smoked for their stimulating effects.

The plant is allied with Saturn and its cortege of powers, but in some cases this affect may be tinted by Venus, or in other cases by Mars. Magically, it appears in rituals of Cleansing, Exorcism, love charms and Protection, with a particularly rich history of ceremonial use in North America.

In Native American usage, the Creeks used Lobelia flowers to ward off ghosts which afflicted the sick and delirious, and among the Iroquois, a root infusion or poultice was used as a medicine against witchcraft. The Cherokee too have used various Lobelia species for overcoming complications induced by foul spirits. In Meskwaki traditions, red and blue flowered Lobelias were used for love medicines.

Weather-magic is also present in the corpus of Lobelia magic. The species known as Cardinal Flower (L. *cardinalis*) was used by the Meskwaki to chase away storms; and its flowers were used by the Jemez in the Rain Dance.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF LOBELIA

Injunction, Elevation, Enhancement, Mercy, Correction, Eradication, Purgation, Consolidation, Violent Catalysis, Blessed Medicine, Liberated Breath, Wise Counsel, and Hard Reckoning.

* * *

LOMATIUM

Lomatium spp.

Apiaceæ (Dill Family)

A GENUS native to North America containing about 50 species of umbelliferous perennial herbs, nearly all found in the wild. Many are aromatic, and several have starchy, edible roots which have given rise to the name Biscuit Root. Many Lomatium species are medicinal, used particularly for respiratory woes, and many are critically endangered due to loss of habitat or overharvesting. Its significance as a power-plant lies mainly in Native American usage, though it is an herb worthy of protection and conservation by all. Species diversity is especially well represented in the states of the Pacific Coast, particularly California.

Among the Kawaiisu Indians of California, the root of *Lomatium californicum* was burned as an incense for frightening evil or intrusive spirits. In some cases, it is used much like *Angelica* species, serving multiple magical uses, including use as a talisman.

The Lakota used it as a love charm. The Pawnee used the aromatic seeds of Desert Biscuitroot L. *foeniculaceum*, also known as Desert Biscuitroot, as a charm to attract many friends, allies and admirers. Seeds were also used as a love charm.

LOQUAT

Eriobotrya japonica

Rosaceæ (Rose Family)

A TREE native to Asia, growing to 10 meters in height, with dark-green glossy leaves to 30 cm in length, and a sweet, single-seeded yellow-orange fruit. It is much planted in gardens as an ornamental and for its fruit, and there are many cultivars.

When consumed in quantity, its fruits are a sedative. This has led to speculation that it may have been the *lōtos* consumed by the 'Lotus Eaters' of Homer's *Odyssey*. Similar to the stones of many Prunus species, its seeds contain toxic cyanogenic glycosides.

Planted outside the home, the tree is a houseward. Its fruit may be used to brew a delightful *melomel*, or fruit mead, as its natural flavor profile is allied to honey; made all the better when sparkling. It may also be used to make a liqueur. The seeds, when dried and hardened, may be strung into prayer beads or other telesmatic objects.

LOTUS

Nelumbo nucifera, Nelumbo lutea

Nelumbonaceæ (Lotus Family)

AN elegant, aquatic herb with stunning pink or pale-yellow flowers and rounded leaves which, like the blooms, hover on stalks up to 2 meters above the surface of the water. There are two species of True Lotus: the Sacred Lotus (*N. nucifera*), native to Asia, and the Yellow Lotus (*N. lutea*), native to North America, although in previous Terran epochs there were other species, now extinct, as revealed in the fossil record. Both surviving Lotus species have been spread by human populations because of their edible seed. In the present day, many Lotus wetlands are threatened due to climate change, agricultural practices, and other human transgression.

The genus *Nelumbo* is confused in some literature with that of the unrelated Water Lily, *Nymphaea*; and the vulgar names 'Lotus' and 'Water Lily' are sometimes used interchangeably. This error of taxonomic misattribution is most commonly perpetuated by those writing about the psychoactive properties of 'Blue Lotus' (*Nympahaea caerulea*), which superficially resembles the True Lotus, but is in a completely separate botanical family.

In folk medicine, the healing potencies of Lotus upon the body are astringent, cardiac tonic, depurative, and febrifuge. In Traditional Chinese Medicine, the rhizome and seeds are regarded to slow the aging process. A classic Ayurvedic tonic employs a mixture of seed of Lotus seed and gold dust, mixed in a base of honey. In North America, tubers and seeds of N. *lutea* were prized as food by such indigenous peoples as The Dakota, Pawnee and Winnebago; the pounded root was also used as a poultice for inflammatory diseases.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF LOTUS

Transcendence, Abiogenesis, Emanation, Prosopopeia, Exaltation, Salubrity, Fecundity, Perfection, Veneration, Sophistication, Feminine Effulgence, Sanctified Flesh, and Quintessential Form.

As considered in astrological medicine and the Doctrine of Signatures, Lotus is allied with the celestial prepotencies of the Moon, as well as Venus. Its magical and mystical powers are Devotion, Origination, Longevity, Immortality, Allure, Meditation, Hex-Breaking, and Protection from Noxious Spirits. In Buddhism particularly, it is reckoned as an embodiment of enlightened regeneration and ascendancy over base matter and its characteristics. Like the Lotus flower which emerges bright and unblemished from the mud, so the Buddha transcends materiality in a pristine state, an example to the wise for an evolutionary incarnation.

Devotional rosaries or *mala* are made from Lotus seeds. In some forms of tantric yoga, the Sahasrara chakra, located at the crown of the head, is spiritually embodied as a Lotus flower with 1,000 petals. In some traditions it is by way of Sahasrara that the soul transits beyond the body after death.

The fresh, scented blooms are used as oblations to a number of deities; the word *puja*, signifying an offertory act of devotion, may be translated as the 'flower act'. The Lotus is particularly associated with Shiva, Vishnu, Lakshmi and Krishna; the name of the second Buddha, Padmasambhava, means 'Born of the Lotus'.

The Sacred Lotus is symbol of erotic desire and female sexual power, particularly associated with goddesshood. The word *padma*, from the Sanskrit *padme*, is a synonym for the vagina, allied to the flower's pink, sensuously-petaled morphology. Lakshmi, who is known as the Lotus Goddess, shares with the flower the epithet *kamala*, betokening love and sexual desire.

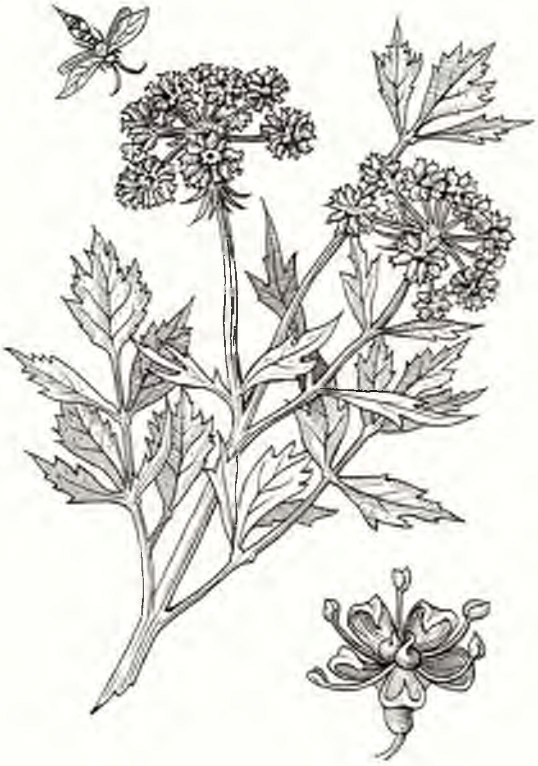
The Lotus is used in Vajikarna therapeutics, which are formulated to treat sexual dysfunction. The *Kama Sutra* mentions a magical bolus compounded of pink and blue Lotus flowers, as well as Cobra Saffron (*Mesua ferria*) and honey or ghee. When consumed, the preparation was said to make one radiantly attractive.

LOVAGE

Levisticum officinale

Apiaceæ (Dill Family)

A BIENNIAL herb growing to 2 meters high, having many-branched stalks; sparse, pinnate, celery-scented leaves, and pale yellow, white or pink umbels. Native to Southern Europe and Iran, all parts of the herb are aromatic. Long valued in love philters and dwelling among the great botanical house of the Apiaceæ, the plant's occult virtues are aligned with Venus. The aerial portions, seeds, and its noble and delectable root—best collected in the plant's first year—are the portions of value in medicine and magic.



The medicinal actions of the plant are antiseptic, stimulant, diuretic, carminative, sedative, anticonvulsant, expectorant. Infusion of the seeds, roots, and leaves acts as a mild depurative, and stronger root preparations are utilized for respiratory complaints. Both aerial portions and root have been esteemed as aphrodisiacs since antiquity. In combination with Anise and Fennel, the herb has enjoyed great repute as an important remedy for jaundice. Medicinally, it has also been used to loosen and expel offending bronchial phlegm, and thereby hoarse coughs, also to check the misery of migraine headache.

The ninth-century *Book of Poisons* specifies Lovage as an important ingredient in certain antidotes and theriacs, particularly its seed known as *Kashim*. In similitude, this herb has a sturdy reputation as an antidote to the excesses of nicotine and alcohol. This understood, its chemical complex is a classic emanation of Apiaceæ pharmacology, and this presents risks alongside benefits. Lovage should be used with caution by pregnant women, and excessive use can irritate the kidneys and urinary tract.

Lovage is a peerless and distinctive aromatic, and a friend in the garden; its culinary value surpasses that of Celery in soups and poultry dishes, yet few modern gardeners grow it. Leaves, seeds and root are highly fragrant, each commanding slightly different aromatic proclivities. Aqueous distillation of the flowers yields an odorous water useful in perfuming and serving as a magical wash; their mild ethanolic distillation is predictably of stronger virtue.

Its occult resonances lie first in the court of Venus, aligned with the promotion of love, union, attraction, harmony and arousal of fleshly desires. In the sorcery of attraction, shavings of the fresh root are employed as a major ingredient in philters of arousal. Later it was exhumed and worn on the person. Similarly, in Slavic magical traditions, an aromatic bath prepared from the root was used by girls to attract lovers.

In the southern United States, it is reckoned as talisman bringing good luck. As a cure for unrequited love, an old magical charm makes an amulet from ritually prepared root: a piece of the root was buried while the sun occupied the sign of Aries. It also appears in rites of Exorcism.

LUCKY HAND

Dactylorhiza spp.
Orchidaceæ (Orchid Family)

GENUS *Dactylorhiza*, Greek for 'finger root', is commonly called the Marsh Orchids, and contains 125 separate species of tuberous plants, usually dwellers of sodden soil and having showy, spotted flowers. The rhizomes of some species, such as *D. maculata*, can, as indicated by the generic name (and with some creative manipulation during the process of dessication) be dried into a small palm-shaped artifact which is used as a talisman in Hoodoo and other traditions of North American folk magic. Some Hand Orchids were formerly classed as *Orchis mascula*, and *O. militaris*. If one does not grow such orchids for private use, the dried tubers of commerce must be purchased, a situation where one often encounters considerable ignorance about the actual botanical origin of the product.

The plant is ruled by Venus, with the prepared tuber aligned with Mercurial principles. Its magical properties are Beneficence, Love, and Success in Gambling. A celebrated Hoodoo mojo employs a Lucky Hand and a pinch of Cinquefoil, wrapped in a red flannel bag and carried on the person, as an impeccable gambling charm. This may also be employed to attract money in general. Root-talismans are often anointed with specially prepared oils as an essential part of their devotional praxis.

The Orchid Lucky Hand talisman participates in a larger corpus of magical tradition known as *Hands* which function in general as spirit-helpers. Some Hands may simply be a magical procedure known to provide aid, while others may take the embodied form of the human hand, either as an amulet or a plant part used in that manner. Other plants may be dried into hand-shaped amulets such as Male Fern (*Dryopteris felix-mas*) and Mandrake (*Mandragora officinarum*), though these forms are typically European rather than North American.

MADDER

Rubia tinctorum
Rubiaceæ (Madder Family)

ALSO known as Tiver, Madder is a low-growing herbaceous perennial, sometimes reaching just over 1 meter, with whorled leaves and similar in morphological impression to its relative Sweet Woodruff (*Galium odoratum*). Flowers appear in small yellow racemes, and the seed is enclosed in a small black berry. The plant produces a slow-growing root, which can attain great lengths, and is the source of an ancient brick-red dye. Madder is native to Europe and naturalized in the United Kingdom and parts of the United States. The genus *Rubia*, being the grouping of Madders, contains about 80 accepted species, one example being R. *peregrinra*, a hardy Mediterranean type also noted as far north as Great Britain.

Historically linked with the color red, Madder was used in ancient India, Egypt, Mesopotamia and Central Asia, with archaeological evidence demonstrating use as a dyestuff as far back as 5,000 years ago. Its tint was used in the Near East as a dye for yarns used in traditional carpets, and when correctly prepared is not only colorfast but depends and becomes richer with time. The root is the source of such colors as Turkey Red or Spanish Brown, obtained through varying methods of extraction and mordanting, usually with alum. Madder has also been used as a traditional cosmetic for such preparations as hair dye.

It sometimes featured in European folk medical formulae, alone or in combination with other plants, for regulating menstruation, and the seed was used in formulae for healing fistulas. It enjoyed limited use as a minor ingredient in some European cordials, but internal use is discouraged due to potential risk of spontaneous abortion, and offenses to the kidneys and liver.

The Spirit-Retinue of Madder

Defense, Valor, Aggression, Alarm, Fastening,
Restriction, Coherence, Transmutation,
Saturation, Surety, Visual Warnings,
True Colors, & Emblazoned Mantles.

* * *

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Among the planets it is classically aligned with Mars, particularly his aspect of conflagration; its perennial magical properties are Protection and Binding. Red is an ancient color of binding and protection from evil, and the plant's protective proterties are manifest through the color provided by its root, and by virtue of its tannin content. Although chemical mordants are required for serious cloth dyeing, a passable rust-brown stain for application on paper can be obtained by merely tincturing prepared dry Madder root in high proof ethanol. In Slavic magic, the plant was considered particularly effective against vampires. Juice from the roots of the related species *Rubia cordifolia* is used to keep away evil spirits. As a mortuary offering of red ochre, it excels.

MAHALEB

Prunus mahaleb

Rosaceæ (Rose Family)

ALSO known as the St. Lucie Cherry or Perfumed Cherry, Mahaleb is a species of Cherry native to West Asia, Europe and North Africa. It grows to 10 meters, having green ovate leaves, white fragrant flowers, and rough, gray bark. The fruit is a small cherry which is black when ripe. Its seed provides aromatics used in Islamic medicine, magic and cuisine, and is both floral and coumarinic, bearing a resemblance to scents of Almond and Rose. The tree is associated with the ancient Mesopotamian goddess Innana.

The name Mahaleb or Mahlab may refer to either the plant or its prepared portions, especially the bitter, aromatic spice extracted from the ground seed used in Mediterranean cuisine. Its root was used in some medieval Arabian counterpoisons, and for treating kidney stones. Oil extracted from the aromatic kernel is known as Baida.

The spice is also used in incenses and perfumes. In Sudanese weddings, the feminine perfume *humra*, or 'redness' is a bridal incense used to enhance femininity and provide magical protection. Oil of Mahaleb, Sandalwood and Clove, compounded with musk, Sandalwood Powder, and smoke of Tobacco is daubed on the body; the perfume is empowering, and keeps away meddling *jinn*.

Mahaleb is also used in the aromatic mixture *Qisret al-Hamis*, used in Greek Orthodox ritual for Maundy Thursday, where it is mixed with leaves of Olive and Palm.

MAIDENHAIR FERN

Adiantum capillus-veneris; *Adiantum* spp.

Polypodiaceæ (Polypody family)

MAIDENHAIR is a small fern with delicate leaves and glossy black stems to just over 0.5 meters. *Adiantum* species grow primarily in temperate zones of the northern hemisphere, growing in moist grottos and on mossy, damp rock walls or exposed ledges. The North American species is *A. pedatum*.

As a simple country remedy the fern was used to treat coughs, asthmas, and pulmonary catarrhs.

It also enjoyed some reputation as a gentle heart and lung tonic, as well as a cleanser of kidney maladies. Native Americans used frond infusions topically to ease the bites of venomous insects and animals, or for scalp and skin washes. Dioscorides gave Maidenhair, blended with wine and Myrtle oil, as a specific for the prevention of baldness.

Its occult properties are best magnified in philters of attraction, particularly for women attracting men; other magical uses include its station as a talisman protecting women in childbirth, protection from lightning, and sorcerous control of the weather. In planetary correspondence, the plant embodies the attributes of Venus, and also Mercury, to a lesser degree. The Navajo employed both the infusion and the smoke of the plant to treat aberrations of mind. In some traditions, Ferns in general are connected with storms and rainmaking, especially when burned; one may thus use powdered Maidenhair as the aetheric backbone of a rain-making incense. The Forest Potawotami used the black stems as a talisman to ensure successful hunting.

* * *

MAIZE

Zea mays

Poaceæ (Grass Family)

AN ANNUAL grass grown as a grain crop with stalks rising to 3 meters, producing its fruit as densely packed, rowed kernels of varying colors, in silk-filled 'ears'. As a cultigen Maize originated in Mexico, first cultivated 10,000 years ago. It gradually spread to widely differing habitats in North and South America, where it was embraced as a staple by Indigenous peoples. The genus *Zea* contains 5–8 species. Species other than *Z. mays* are referred to as *teosintes*, or wild corns, and are currently threatened with extinction. The portions used ritually are the kernels, flowers and pollen.

Maize is allied with the planetary retinue of the Sun, being warming, nourishing, and concerned with fecundation and the establishment of dominion. Its magical powers are Fertility, Summoning, Oblation, Beneficence, Wealth, Exorcism, and Divination. The ancient Peruvians used the seed-meal to make sacred cakes for rites of Solar worship. Maize, along with the Water Lily, was associated with the Mayan Rain God Chac.

The Aztecs knew it as Mahiz, Tlaolli, and Centli. According to the 16th century Spanish navigator Hernando de Alarcón, the Aztec sorcerers of ancient Mexico favored the grains for fortune-telling. Benevolent spirits were acknoeldeged to dwell within the kernels and had the power to dispel demons. The most beautiful kernels were selected, then spread on a cloth in groups of 19 or 25. The corn was also floated in water for divination.

Huichol shamans employ Maize kernels for trapping demons and spirits of disease, as do the shamans of the Zinacantecos of Chiapas. Seeds of varying color are placed in a basin of salt water. By observing how much of which colour kernel sinks or floats, the shaman makes the prognosis.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF MAIZE

Plenitude, Virility, Seduction, Marrow, Endowment, Festival, Bequest, Dissemination, Acquisition, Consolidation, Community, Divine Ancestry, Sovereign Raiments, and Uberous Provision.

The ancient Mayans regarded corn as integral to human essence. In Mayan myth, the great grandmother-seer Xmucane created the first humans from cornmeal ground from the sacred corn kernels of Paxil, a great mountain of seeds and fruit. As with many creation stories, these first humans knew far too much, and thus disturbed the gods, who took away some of their understanding and wisdom.

In the witchcraft of New Mexico, a love charm used by women featured corn kernels that had been chewed, then rubbed on the Piñacate Beetle (*Eleodes obscurus*). During the course of amorous activity, these charmed kernels were dropped on a man's head to ensnare his heart.

Among the Navajo and Pueblo, Maize kernels, meal, and pollen were used for oblations for the gods. Unusually shaped ears of corn are highly prized magical fetishes that protect the dead and the newborn and give power to cult initiates.

CORRESPONDENCES
Powers: Fortification, Triumph.
Element: Earth.
Planet: Sun.
God: Centeōtl.
Goddess: Chicomecoatl.
Divine Appellation: *theocintli*='food of the gods.'
Virtue: Agriculture.
Body Part: Heart, Genitals.
Asterism: The Pleiades.
Colors: Yellow and Green.
Therapeutic: Sustenance.
Affliction: Empire.
Magical Gesture: Blood Sacrifice.
Emblem: A golden phallus arising from the green earth, receiving the light of a 7-rayed Solar disk.

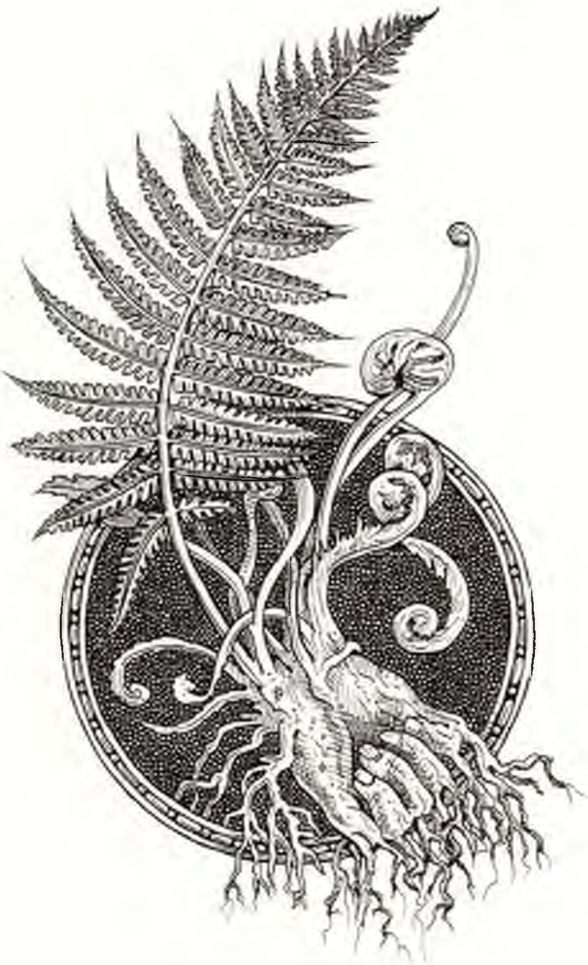
MALE FERN

Dryopteris filix-mas

Dryopteridaceæ (Wood Fern Family)

A MEDIUM sized, cosmopolitan fern of northern temperate zones growing to 1 meter in height, with divided green fronds uncurling from the plant's crown. The portions used are the root and immature frond.

Older traditions of medicine reckoned the rhizome an effective vermifuge, particularly as an antihelmintic. Excessive doses are dangerous and cause retching, yellow-tinted vision, temporary or permanent blindness, severe hearing problems, and CNS paralysis. Fatal poisoning ends with tetanus-like spasmodic contractions and cardio-pulmonary collpase. As internal use of the plant comes with considerable health risks, it has largely been replaced as an antiparasitic by other courses of treatment. It has also been used externally for wounds; the roots, mashed and steeped in hot oil, may be employed as a poultice.



Its power in celestial correspondence is given to the severe emanations of Saturn, with some temperance from Mercury, and it is aligned with the element of Air. In the magical arts, its power as protection from maleficia, protection for livestock, protection from lightning, and weather magic. The plant was also used as a love charm to attract male partners. Glass made from the ashes of the Fern was regarded as enchanted.

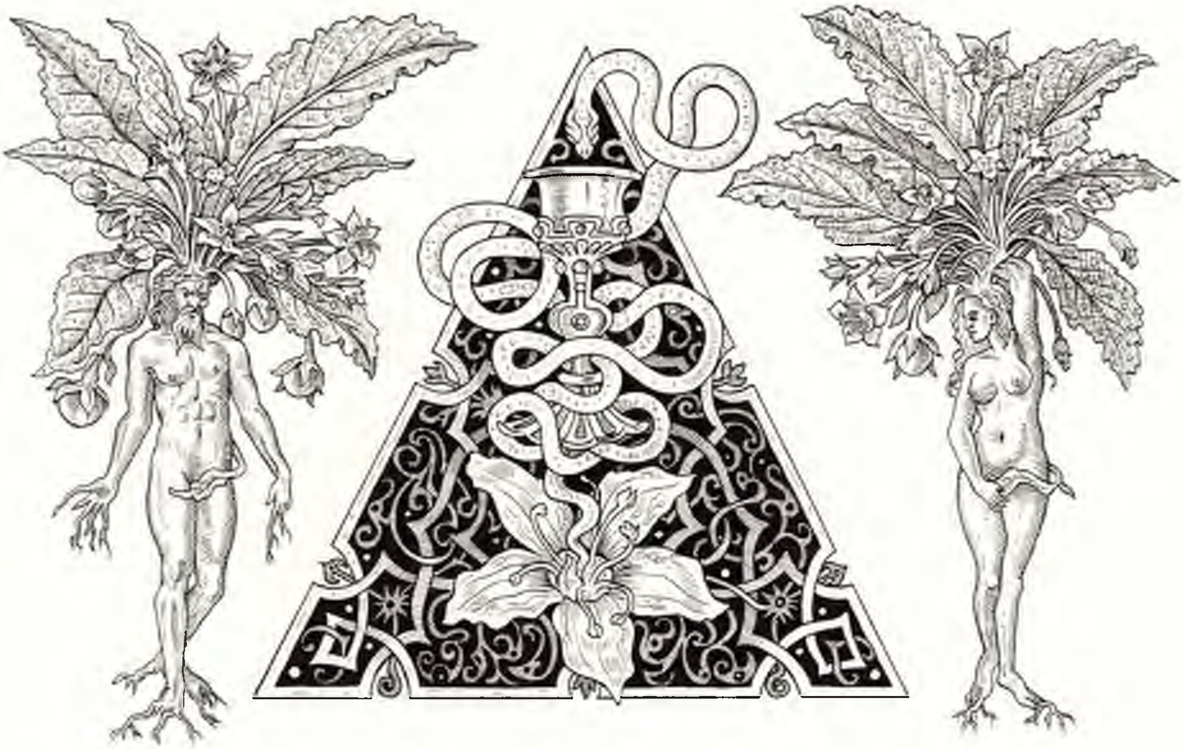
*

The Spirit-Reintue of Male Fern

Vigilance, Catharsis, Extermination, Expungement, Obduracy, Consolidation, Condensation, Coadjuvancy, Reparation, Primordial Poison, Verdant Munitions, Ready Response, Lusty Appeal.

An archaic English root-charm called a Lucky Hand or Dead Man's Hand was made from Male Fern. The plant's rootstock was exhumed, and the coiled fronds cut away until only five remained. The resulting fetish, when fumigated with the smoke of a fire on St. John's Eve (June 23rd), made a potent talisman for protection, and for sending curses back to those who has cast them. This same artifact was also known as a *Hand of St. John*.

In some traditions, Ferns in general are connected with storms and rain-making. Burning Male Fern in particular was a spell to bring rain. Its powers of provoking storms also testify to its readiness in warfare, magical and medicinal.



MANDRAKE

Mandragora officianarum

Solanaceæ (Nightshade Family)

PROCEEDING from the strata of occult lore as a disquieting and contorted phantasm, the enigmatic Mandrake has a thick, fleshly taproot to one half meter long, and stalkless, slightly notched, oval leaves forming a rosette. It has purple flowers, producing a heady aroma, and its fruits are green, turning deep yellow to orange when ripe. Round in shape, these plum-sized, pleasingly aromatic 'apples' are filled with a juicy pulp. When the plant thrives at its peak, the leaves grow up to 30 cm. in length. The root may assume grotesque forms, some humanoid in appearance. In its place of botanical origin, wild Mandragora inhabits lonely country, led by Nature to favor dry and warm climates; it prefers open, disturbed or fallow sites, populating ruins or other areas eschewed by humanity. Sometimes it is found bordering vineyards, orchards or groves. The plant is known for its toxic tropane alkaloids, present in force in the root and leaves.

Contrary to the writings of many redactors of plant folklore, Mandrake is not a species of *Atropa*, which is properly the taxonomical genus of Belladonna. This error often is a holdover from Linnaean classification which designated the plant *Atropa mandragora* (the two plants, though in the same botanical family, are extremely different morphologically). There is disagreement on how many species occupy *Mandragora*, ranging from 2 to 6, but the official Mandrake (*M. officinarum*), endemic to the Mediterranean, has accreted much of the root-magic and lore for which the plant has become notorious. A second species, M. *autumnalis*, preferring habitats somewhat cooler, is found north and eastward, and is sometimes classified as a subspecies of *M. officinarum*.

The root's natural propensity for grotesquerie has transfixed mankind and is exploited by various techniques of hand-shaping as it grows. Immature roots are dug and trimmed, scratched, wounded and trussed with thread and bandages, only to be buried and allowed to heal. On maturation, further shaping and callousing yields roots of great monstrosity. After drying, such root effigies can be further shaped by carving. This technique was practiced in Turkey and Syria, and may have diffused into Europe in the Middle Ages. At one time Mandrake root effigies were in such demand as love charms that roots from adulterant species such as Bryony and Iris were substituted.

To some, the plant exudes a characteristic stench redolent of the Devil's hindparts; to others it is a fragrance at once arousing and alarming, suggestive of erotic nightmares and bitter poisons. Plants may vary greatly from one individual to the next in the concentration of their odor, and each part of the plant, from the subterranean root-anatomies to the ripened fruits, smells slightly different. The aromatic fractions, though mostly ignored in magical lore, are an essential component of the plant's power, and may be variously expressed through pressing, distillation and other means. Here, odor-discernment is key.

The origin of the name *Mandragora* is obscure, possibly from the Persian *mardum-gia* ('man-plant'). The Hebrew *dudaim* refers to the berry-like fruits, though it has also been translated variously as jasmine, lilies, mushroom, and violets. The word is thought to derive from the Hebrew *dod, david* 'carnal love', or 'beloved'. Its Old Persian name *ebrewi-ssanam* means 'face of an idol', and *Morion* meant Root of Folly. In some lore, it was called Baar root, and by night it radiated health-giving beams of light.

LITANY OF NAMES

Dragon Doll
Grace of God
Torturer's Root
Dudaim
Gallows Root
Matragun
Jinn Apple
Mandrax
Semihominus
Tuphac el Shaitan
Jabruh
Mihr-Gayah

Mandrake is frequently classified as a Saturnian herb; this is right and proper due to the venom of its root, its grotesque appearance, and its action upon the body. We may further add the Moon and Venus to its celestial rulers, the first reflecting its bewitching action and mutable shape, the second in consideration of its use as a philter, glamour, and fecundator, as well as the voluptuousness of its fruits. Some have also classed it as belonging to Mercury, which, considering its effect upon the mind and nervous system, is not without merit. As used in folk magic, Mandrake's esoteric principles are many, but paramount among its spirit-powers are Allure, Coercion, Love, Fertility, Beneficence, Cursing, Invisibility, Potentiation, and Success in Legal Matters. In the European grimoire traditions, incenses of the Planet Saturn have included Mandrake as an ingredient.

According to the Orphic Song of the Argonauts, Mandrake inhabited the garden of Hecate; according to Lucian, the root dwelt with the Poppy on the dark isle of Hypnos. One aspect of the Greek love-goddess was Aphrodite Mandragoritis, 'Aphrodite of the Mandrake.' Some medieval European traditions concerning the Mandrake identified it as the Tree of Paradise.

When digging Mandrake, the seeker was advised to be wary of sudden gusts of wind; some traditions held that one should begin digging the root just prior to sunset, not plucking it from the ground until the sun was safely below the horizon. The ancient Greek method was to harvest the root with the wind at one's back.

In medieval European traditions, the best root is that which has been dug in the shadow of the gallows-pole, and springs from the coagulated semen or urine of an executed criminal. More specific lore records that the hanged man must be a thief and had no sexual relations with women.

In many traditions, the root was said to utter an affronted scream, something the harvester took pains to avoid hearing, sealing the ears with pitch or wax, for to be exposed to the sound resulted in death. Many traditional rites insisted on employing a hungry dog, jaded with meat, to pull the root, to absorb the force of the Mandrake's curse. Other methods wary of the plant's retributive anger extracted it from the ground using specially prepared magical traps and snares.

In her *Physica* of 1151, Hildegard of Bingen advises that the root, once dug from the earth, should be immersed in running water so to leach out its baneful magic prior to use. Hildegard's magico-medical approach to the plant was strongly melothesic, prescribing the different 'body parts' of the anthropoid root to be eaten to cure ailments in the corresponding region of the human body. "...in whatsoever member he suffers let him eat a similar member of its form and he will be better."

In present-day Romania, the collection of Mandrake is a colourful and often complex affair, involving eating, drinking, and dancing, often by naked by women and girls who embrace or fondle each other, sometimes simulating the sexual act. Magical formulae may be recited to the plant, as well as appeals to its Genius for the intended use of the Root. Before it is plucked the plant may be offered wine, or sprinkled therewith; the newly-plucked Root may also be bathed in wine. It is to be noted here that the root referred to as mandragora or *matraguna* is often the root of Belladonna. Yet the use of the name 'mandragora', and the features of the harvesting rite, likely present a compound inheritance of solanaceous root-gathering traditions which once included Mandrake, Belladonna, and Scopolia. Here, as with many folk systems of plant classification, the basis of identity is not so much genetic, but rather magical, based in part on the plant's ingenium, habitus, and magical potentials. These include the forces of lust, sorcery, and poison.

The Spirit-Retinue of the Mandrake

Domination, Intercession, Serendipity, Fornication, Fructification, Monstrosity, Benumbment, Unveiling, Fructification, Amorous Pleasures, Spectral Omen, Pactum Expressum, and Fatal Ejaculations.

Generally, the Mandrake is attached to an ancient complex of magic and belief which ascribes luck and beneficence to its possessor. An ancient Sumerian spell prescribes nine drugs, among them Mandrake, gathered in a leather bag and hung round the neck for increasing luck and gaining the favor of the gods. In Armenian folklore, King Solomon and Alexander the Great owed their great successes in part to the magic of Mandrakes in their possession. A small piece of root worn on the body is a traditional lucky charm used by German girls.

In French and German traditions of folk magic, the owner of a well-cared for plant would never encounter poverty, and likely would realize considerable riches. The belief that one may ask the spirit of Mandrake for anything and receive their wish is also widespread in central and Eastern Europe. Romanian tavern-keepers put a bit of the root in a bottle of liquor, or underneath a cask, to ensure a steady flow of well-paying clientele. Alrauns, being carved fetishes made from Mandrake, or simply the whole dried root itself, possessed the power to render its owner invisible, as well as reveal the location of hidden treasure.

Fertility, sexual vigor and fleshly vitality was another power complex attending upon the plant in its magical history. In the Near East it was esteemed for aphrodisiac qualities; however, this power was often accessed through use of the carved root as a talisman. To this day the fruit, known as *abou rouhr* ('giver of life') is still employed in the traditional pharmacopeias of the Middle East, where it is considered beneficial to pregnant women. An old Jewish folk-magic prescribed a Mandrake root placed under a barren woman's bed, in order that she might conceive. Saint Hildegard maintained the root was formed of the same rude earth as primordial Adam and prescribed it as a medicine for lewdness.

In some texts, Mandrake is linked with the homunculus, the artificially created human, conceived in glass vessels by the alchemical art. The ancient text *The Recital of Salaman and Absal* told the tale of King Hermanos, who wished to continue his bloodline but was not inclined toward women. His trusted sage was consulted, who, at an astrologically auspicious time, took a small amount of the King's semen and placed it in a Mandrake root. By this means, a boy was created alchemically, who was named Salaman.

As an extension of the beneficent properties of the plant, the spirit of the Mandragora was also known for protecting its owner's family and domicile. The ancient Arab botanist and pharmacologist Ibn al Baytar described the Mandrake as having the ability to cure all maladies caused by Jinn, demons, and Shaitan, as well as insanity, and having the powers to prevent theft and murder.

> If any see some heavy mischief in his house let him take this wort Mandragoras into the middle of the house as much of it as he then may have by him; he compelleth all evils out of the house.
>
> Herbarium of Pseudo-Apuleius, 4th c.

Mandrake is a unique storehouse of poisonous principles, associated with ancient pharmacy, witchcraft, and criminality. The root and leaves of Mandrake contain varied concentrations of the tropane alkaloids scopolamine, cuscohygrine, atropine, apotropine, hyoscine, solandrine, and hyoscyamine. Intoxication is presented in several distinct stages, the first being stimulation, followed in turn by mild narcosis, trance, delirium, dissociation, and finally a stupor known as the 'Ape of Death'. Overdose causes death by respiratory paralysis. These effects generally follow the intoxication pattern of many tropane-bearing nightshades such as *Brugmansia* but seem to possess a more extended gradient approaching the twilight of consciousness. Cuscohygrine, an alkaloid once known as mandragorine, is also found in leaves of Coca.

Medicinally, it has ancient use, together with Opium, as possibly the earliest anesthetic. Most of the literature from antiquity specifies the fresh root as opposed to the dried; in some cases the fresh root was rotted or fermented before use. In Roman times 'Death Wine', made from spiritous infusion of Mandragora, was given to persons being crucified or tortured. In his *Demonomanie* of 1580, the demonological writer Jean Bodin noted the contemporary use of mandrake potions in Turkey to anaesthetize soon-to-be eunuchs prior to castration. This inebriating liquor, whose precise formulation is lost, caused a deep narcotic stupor lasting up to four days.

In some medieval recipes for intoxicating Mandrake brews, the root was prepared by rotting in water for two complete lunar cycles, until it transmogrified into a malodorous green pulp; then it was used in this form, or in a gruel, or added to a brew with sundry ingredients. These may be an inheritance of a kindred procedure, originating in an early Arabic formulary, which details the concoction of a Mandrake poison by allowing the root to rot until stinking. The remaining portions were allowed to putresce further until the pulp was green and white. Thus created, the poison was added to the victim's food with the craftiest of subterfuge, soon causing delirium, paranoia, itching, seizures and death.

Mandragora appears in DeLancre's *On the Inconstancy of Witches* as an ingredient in the witches' flying salve. Though its station as a member of the botanical clan of the Nightshades implicates it as a possible ingredient, ointment recipes reported from this period including *Mandragora* are in fact rare. In his *Book on Poisons*, Ibn Wahshiya reports a venefic practice of assassination by carving mandrake into the shape of a skull prior to secreting it into the food or drink of an unsuspecting victim.

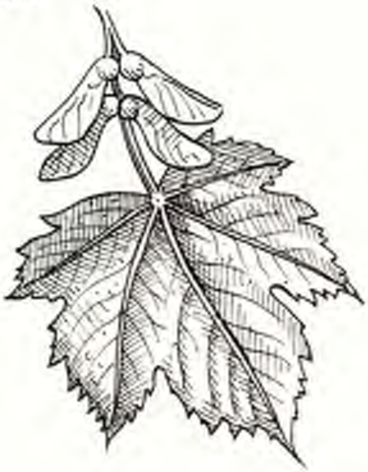
CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Allure, Wealth, Fertility, Revelation, Death.
Virtue: Possession.
Element: Earth.
Planets: Mercury, Venus, Saturn.
Presiding Angel: Shemhazai.
Alchemical Concept: Homunculus.
Domains: Gallows-Ground, Wasteland.
Embodied State: Narco-Æsthesia.
Poison: Oblivion.
Therapeutic: Anæsthesia.
Affliction: Egomania.
Emblem: A naked sage in asana, crowned with a star, at the entrance to a cave.

MAPLE

Acer spp.
Aceraceæ (Maple Family)

COMPRISING the botanical genus *Acer*, Maples encompass 160 accepted species of trees and shrubs in the northern hemisphere, being mostly deciduous, and growing to 50 meters in height. Their leaves are characteristic, being roughly palmate and lobed. Maple fruits are known as *samaras* and are known by their propeller-like spinning when drifting from the tree to the ground. One of the most showy of deciduous trees in Autumn, Maple leaves produce a color spectrum including magenta, red, pink, orange and yellow.



The wood, leaves, and sap are the parts of the tree used. The Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*) is valued for its sugary sap, boiled for syrup and candy. Many species are valued as horticultural specimens, such as Japanese Maple (*Acer palmatum*) of which there are in excess of 1,000 cultivars. The wood is suitable for carving and joinery, and superior acoustic qualities for making musical instruments.

The tree is aligned with the planetary powers of Jupiter. As used in ceremony and magic, it is used in operations of Love, Allure, Longevity, as well as serving a valued Funerary ally. In North America, Karok women employed the branches as a Love Medicine, and old Hungarian lore relays the story of a shepherd who charmed the affections of a king's beautiful daughter with an enchanted Maplewood flute.

In England, Sussex folklore attributed strong powers of vitality and revival to Maples. Sick or dying children were made healthy by being passed between Maple branches, and certain trees were locally respected as great healers.

Wood from the Box Elder (*Acer negundo*) was burned by the Cheyenne as an incense for making magical medicines and during Sundance ceremonies; the Kiowa did likewise in the altar fire for their peyote ceremony. Eastern Algonquian tribes planted Maples atop graves.

MARJORAM

Origanum majorana

Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

SWEET Marjoram is an herb of the Woody Lamiaceae, a low-growing bushy perennial native to Asia but established in Europe, North Africa and the Levant. Like its cousin Oregano, it has small ovate leaves, which are more glaucous, with tiny white flowers. Its aromatic profile is complex, having notes of camphoraceous green, spiciness, bitterness, pungency, and traces of citrus. True Essential Oil of Marjoram, distilled from the flowering tops, is rare, or of varying quality, and sometimes adulterated. This is due in part to the cost and difficulty of the extraction of the oleoresin. Some theorize that O. *majorana* was the sacred Hyssop mentioned in the Bible, used for purification of the temple.

Its planetary alignments are harmonized with Mercury and Venus, in equal measure, and understanding the botanical relationship between these two forces in the plant is a key to the success of using it. The occult properties of Marjaram are Marriage, Allure, Love-Charms, Longevity, Protection against Noxious Spirits, Protection from Maleficia, and House Ward. It also is linked with promoting Success in Commerce; a Marjoram plant grown outside a business, well tended and pampered, was said to lure riches across the threshold and drive away competitors. Medieval occult traditions considered it aligned with the Star Deneb Algedi (δ Capricorni), by tradition the plant belonged to St. Luke, patron of physicians.The aromatic plant was a common remedy against melancholy in ancient times, and preferred varieties of it were known in Egypt and Syria as *Sampsuchum.*

> Venus showered a dew of peaceful sleep on the
>   limbs of
> Ascanius, snuggled him in her breast, and
>   divinely bore him
> Up to Idalian groves, where the tender Marjoram
>   puts him
> To bed in a cradle of flowers and shade and
>   entrancing fragrance.
>
> VIRGIL, *Æneid*

Since ancient days, the plant has been strongly associated with mirth, ardor, and erotic love; some traditions held that the bed linens of lovers should be scented with it. Crowns of Marjoram adorned newlyweds in Greek and Roman marriage rites. The leaves and blossoms are an indispensable (but easily used to excess) addition to love philters.

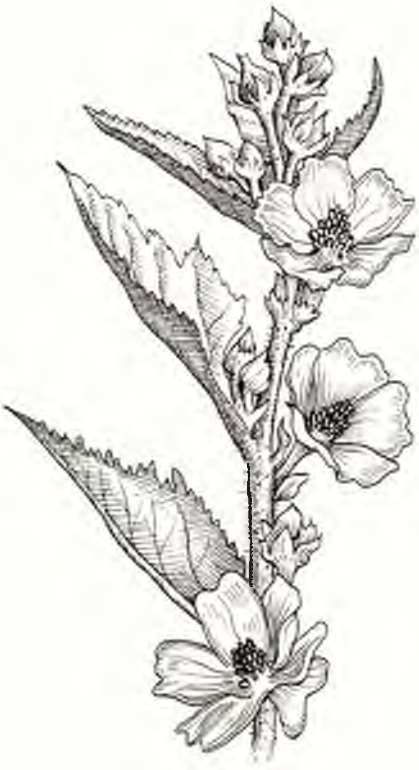
In Polish folk magic, it was not only accredited with aphrodisiac powers, it also possessed its opposite—the power to suppress lust. This bespeaks the plant's complete mastery of the erotic sphere, both as a distinct component of the human corpus, and its integration with all other fractions of the body, subtle and gross. For this reason, it may serve to arouse, but also temper lust; it may give animus to a love-charm, but also serve the work of easing heartbreak and healing the emotional body. For this reason, doctors in the early modern era commended its use for 'hysteria'.

> A product of the strong summer sunshine, *Origanum marjorana* brings real heat—not that which burns and assaults like *Origanum compactum*, but rather the warmth which arouses and fills the individual with elation for life.
>
> PHILLIPPE MAILHEBAIU
> *Portraits in Oils*, 1995

The dried leaves, buds and stems are strongly fragrant and retain their aromatic principles when burned, making the plant a useful ingredient in incense, whether for medical, religious or magical use. Indeed, the smoke of the plant has repute as a cure for cough. In North Africa, Marjoram was a magical traditional Moroccan fumigation for promoting vigor in livestock, created by smoldering branches and leaves of the plant. A traditional Sudanese suffumigant of Marjoram treated asthma and migraine.

In Mediterranean folk medical traditions, it was regarded as an antidote to snake venom, and a plant of longevity. It was also scattered as a grave offering for ancestors, to ensure them a restful sleep in the world of the spirits.

The old Norwegian spellbooks now known as *The Black Books of Elverum* contain a spell for revealing a thief employing a magic mirror smeared with a dough made from Marjoram, holy water, and breast milk from a woman who has delivered a male child. The mirror should be smeared completely with the mixture at Nine o' Clock on a Thursday evening.



MARSH MALLOW

Althaea officinalis
Malvaceæ (Mallow Family)

AN HERBACEOUS perennial herb to 2 meters, having velvety leaves, with a perpendicular branching root and erect woody stems, growing on the borders of salt marshes, producing white to pink blossoms in late summer. Roots and flowers are the portions used; roots and leaves are collected in Spring or Autumn, then quickly dried to prevent mold and rot.

Marsh Mallow's soothing virtues have been recognized in folk medicine for treating insect stings, ulcers, and wounds. Such maladies are treated with a poultice of boiled Marsh Mallow roots, externally applied, to reduce swellings. Infusions of the root will dispel ulcers, diarrhea, coughs, insomnia, and pleurisy, as well as release retained afterbirth. A root-decoction made from from several whole, chopped fresh roots is useful for irritation and inflammation of the mucus membranes. The valued portion of the plant in these receipts is the mucilage, a slippery substance common to many plants in the Malvaceae, such as Okra.

Its principal occult powers are Healing, Blessing, Restoration, and love-charming, as well as serving to drive away repugnant spirits. Its principle planetary attribution is with Venus, but it also partakes of the power of the Sun and Jupiter. In the human body, it is allied to the genitals, breasts and the lymphatic system, particularly to the tides of their swelling and shrinking. In keeping with its attunements with the rise and fall of marsh-tides, it is naturally allied with the element of Water.

Traditional Anglo-Saxon leechcraft made use of the Marsh Mallow as magical specific against the mysterious 'Water Elf Disease'. Ointments made from it were used to remove hexes from bewitched persons. In medieval magical tradition, root of Mallow wrapped in black wool and bound to the thigh with Flax was a charm against diseases of the breasts. A flower-infusion yields a valuable ritual love-philtre, and the mucilage may be used for ritual anointing.

MARSH MARIGOLD

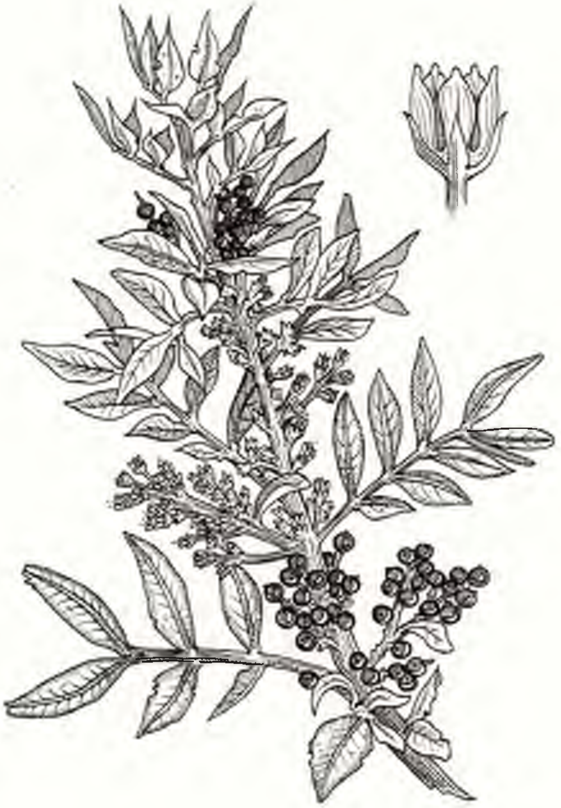
Caltha palustris

Ranunculaceæ (Sunflower Family)

A LOW-GROWING herbaceous perennial of the northern hemisphere, Marsh Marigold inhabits swamps, meadows, riparian corridors and sodden ground habitats of the arctic and subartic regions. Having short hollow stems, dark green reniform leaves, and five-petalled yellow flowers, it grows to a height of 60 cm. It is commonly known as King Cup, Horse Blob, Water-Dragon, and Palsywort; in his play *Cymbeline*, Shakespeare mentions them as Marybuds. Its generic name *Caltha* indicates a chalice or goblet; the plant is associated with the old Irish festival of Beltaine and is in full bloom in May. The genus *Caltha* contains seven to ten species.

In North America, the Chippewa used the boiled and mashed plant as a poultice for wounds, elsewhere in the world it has been used similarly to diminish sores and blisters. The leaves and roots have been used as a foodstuff, but the plant is considered poisonous and requires boiling to neutralize toxic protoanemonins before consumption.

Aligned with the Sun, Marsh Marigold is also assigned the element of Water, so important to its habitat, and in which it can thrive fully submerged. Its occult powers are Protection, Exorcism, and Purification. In the British Isles it was associated with the Virgin Mary, and used as a household protective amulet, particularly on May Eve. The Manx ascribed it anti-witchcraft properties. The Iroquois used the root as a spiritual emetic, to purge the effects of love charms. In Icelandic lore, the plant was used as an amulet to prevent angry words spoken against the wearer; Irish traditions wove wreaths of the plant as amulets to protect cattle from evil spirits and malefic magic.



MASTIC

Pistacia lentiscus

Anacardiaceæ (Cashew Family)

THE Lentisk, or *Mastiha*, as the tree is known, is a low, sprawling evergreen shrub with leathery, pinnate leaves and tiny round, red fruits, native to the eastern Mediterranean region. It is grown principally on the Greek Isle of Chios. Resin is exuded naturally but is also harvested from deliberately-inflicted wounds. The resin usually dries on contact with the air, forming transparent light-yellow tears. Mastic tears should dissolve when placed in the mouth and are refreshing; the resin was used in the harems of Turkey and Arabia as a breath-sweetener. It is also sometimes present in Raki, the legendary Turkish *aqua vitae* distilled from grapes or figs. The related Terebinth (*P. atlantica*), which also yields a fragrant resin, is a deciduous tree. This tree is thought to be the source of Chios Balm, a precious ingredient in ancient Egyptian unguents.

In ancient times Mastic was used to treat rheumatism, intestinal complaints and venereal disease. Resin of the Atlas Mastic, *Pistachia atlantica*, is preferred by some, and the fruit of this tree, known as *derou*, is recommended in the *Perfumed Garden* of Nefzawi as an aphrodisiac for men. Having been pounded and duly macerated in oil and honey, the preparation is drunk to attain strength in coitus and multiply the semen.

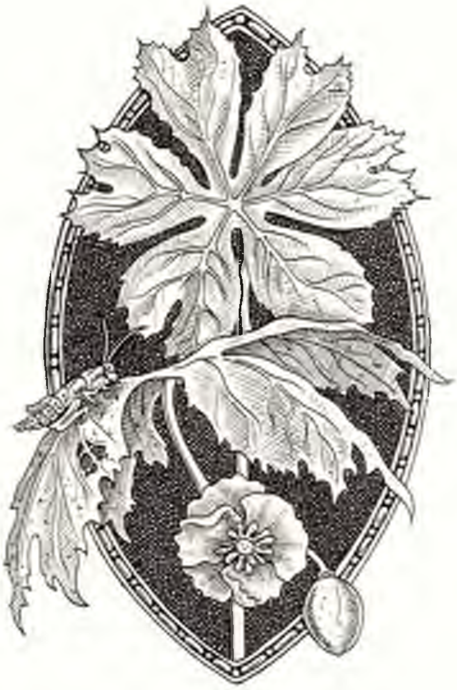
Its essence is bright, attenuating, and illluminating; it has a tessellative quality which allows it to readily ally with other plants, especially when burned as an incense. It is often attributed with a Solar correspondence, and this is validated by its morphology and preferred growing conditions, thus, the tree, when whole, belongs to the Sun. However, in its resinous expression as a gum, a substance removed from the tree, it is aligned with Mercury, for its mutability and action upon mental clarity.

Mastic resin is a frequent incense in operations of the European grimoires. It is the magical operator's incense of choice in the grimoire *The Ars Almadel*, the Fourth Book of Solomon the King.

> The spirit should now appear as a slowly clearifying mist over the talisman; if no apperition begins to form, mark the candles with the seal and again recite the invocation. As the mist clears place the mastick on the hot ash and place the censer under the talisman; when the spirit smells the mastick he will ask why he has been so called.
>
> *The Ars Almadel*

Mastic, together with 'Gum Aromatick' is used as the principal suffumigant in the necromantic operations of the 1665 grimoire *Conjuration*, originally appended to the third edition of Reginald Scot's *Discoverie of Witches*. The focus of the rite is compelling the corpse of a recently hanged person to stir. The little-known grimoire *The Book of Angels, Rings, Characters and Images of the Planets* compounds an incense of Venus from Mastic and Aloes Wood.

A potent banishing *sahumerio* (incense) often used in Santeria to chase noxious spirits from the corners of rooms, is compounded from Mastic, Frankincense, Storax, Garlic skins, and brown sugar, the whole smoldered over coals.



MAY APPLE

Podophyllum peltatum

Berberidaceæ (Barberry Family)

DIMINUTIVE in stature, the May Apple is noted by its large parasol-shaped leaf, to 25 cm. in diameter, rising on a single stalk. It is found in the understory of the shaded woodlands of eastern North America, where clusters of the plants, resembling an elfin troop, proffer a haunting appearance. The flower produces a curious odor, seductive to some noses, yet noisome to others, appearing in late May to early June. Its roots, while substantive, are small, straight, and roughly cylindrical: these in no manner resemble the anthropomorphic Mandrake, which May Apple is sometimes called, and often unscrupulously sold as. Its fruit is a large oval berry, yellow when ripe, and, purged of its toxic seeds, edible. This fruit-pulp has traditionally been made into and pastries, pies and aromatic jellies. The roots are dug in late summer, when the leaves drop.

The toxic principles pervading the whole of the plant make it effective both as a balm to human affliction, and as an agent for extermination of insect pests. Its roots are acrid, purgative and diuretic, and the portion favored in folk medicine. It has Native American use as a vermifuge, as well as a deadly poison. Handling the plant, or concentrations of it, can provoke rashes or blisters in sensitive individuals. This radical action upon the skin informs its power as a medicine against skin lesions and aberrations of 'proud flesh'.

Shathjalari (*Podophyllum hexandrum*) a May Apple species native to India, is used medicinally in much the same manner as its North American cousin, particularly as topical plasters for healing and rejuvenating skin, or arresting dermal infections such as ringworm. May Apple produces podophylloxin ($C_{22}H_{22}O_8$) a compound prevalent in the May Apple genus, which shows antiviral activity and is used topically for the treatment of various warts, usually in the form of pharmaceutical ointments. Its intriguing properties of disrupting human cell division has made it the focus of novel anti-cancer research, as well as several pharmaceutical drugs.

Love, Coercion, Harmony, and Healing are its principal occult properties. When utilized as a medicinal, May Apple favorably aligns with the planetary emanation of Mars, particularly his parching and burning aspect. As used in magic, it participates in the realms of Saturn and Venus, either as single powers or, more often, together. Lurking in the shadows of trees, the character of the plant is a reminder of the spiritual might which conceals itself in the guise of physical modesty.

As a Native American power-plant, May Apple was esteemed as a Love Medicine among the Delaware and Oklahoma, including usage for reconciliation of quarreling spouses. The Iroquois used a decoction of the leaves, together with allied herbs, as a ceremonial wash for corn kernels prior to sowing.

MEADOW RUE

Thalictrum spp.

Ranunculaceæ (Buttercup Family)

GENUS *Thalictrum*, encompassing the Meadow Rues or Rue Anemones, contains about 150 individual species and is widely distributed over temperate areas, preferring shade and moist ground. Some species and their cultivars adapt well to the garden, as with other members of the Buttercup family. Known by folk-names such as Quicksilver Weed, King of the Meadow, Wazimna, Maid of the Mist, and Taba Enlu, it is often considered a powerful plant charm in areas with longstanding traditions of magical plant usage. Its roots are purgative and diuretic, and sometimes fragrant; in country medicine was a specific for snakebite, and to cure cramps. Its ascribed magical properties are generally as a love charm, and for healing. California Indian tribes employed the dried root in shampoos, while the seeds were crushed for perfumes. The Blackfoot dried the entire plant for use in perfumes. Among the Potowatomi, the seed was baked into food and as a healing charm, to mend relations betwixt quarreling lovers or mates. Hunters of the Forest Potawotami smoked the seeds of *Thalictrum dasycarpum* to assure good quarry.

MEADOW SAFFRON

Colchicum autumnale

Colchicaceæ (Colchium Family)

ONCE known as the Hermodactyl, of Finger of Hermes, the lethal Meadow Saffron is native to Europe. It emerges low to the ground, and bears a radiant, six-petaled purple flower, with a superficial resemblance to True Saffron (*Crocus sativus*). In fact, the Hermodactylus resides in its own family, and is many times more poisonous. Its bulblike 'root' structure is actually a corm, a type of modified underground stem. Hildegard of Bingen was oustspoken in her distrust of it, noting its tendency of bodily diminishment; despite this, in late medieval Islamic medicine it was investigated as an aphrodisiac.

Toxicity is due to the alkaloid colchicine ($C_{22}H_{25}NO_6$). As its lethal effects from ingestion are certain at the threshold of 10–30 mg, it has been used as an agent of suicide. Death can be protracted and ugly, resulting from sepsis and multiple organ failures. The poisonous principles are most acutely concentrated in the leaves and fruit.

Despite its venomous potentials, and campaigns against its uses as an official medicine, it was propounded as a remedy for gout. Both oxymels and tinctures of Meadow Saffron were recommended therapeutics in the 18th century. Using the ancient humoral doctrines, its action was ascribed to the purging of phlegm, in the specific case of gout being uric acid. In the present day, colchicine has some efficacy for treatment of pseudo-gout, or pyrophosphate arthritis, as well as several other conditions including pericarditis.

In planetary correspondence, the Meadow Saffron is generally assimilated to the court of Saturn, owing to its poisonous and purging nature, though its characteristics also resonate with the bewitching aspects of Venus, aligned with the demoness Lilith. In magical usage, it serves well in the role of House Ward as a living specimen in the medicine-garden.

MEADOWSWEET

Filipendula ulmaria

Rosaceæ (Rose Family)

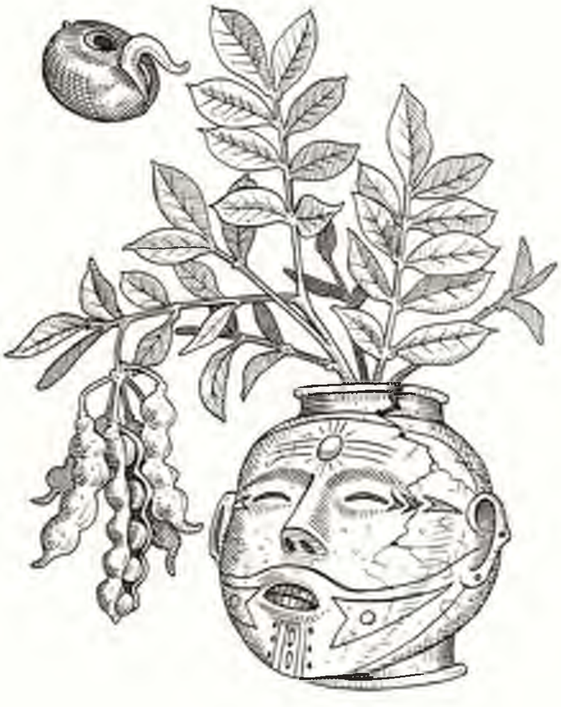
A STATELY, transfixing herb to 2 meters, populating moist meadows and riparian corridors, having wintergreen-scented leaves and creamy-golden, almond-scented flowers. The virtues of these odorous blossoms have been used to flavor mead, wines and jams, and in antiquity their oil was used in perfumes. Its name Meadsweet, from the west of England, testifies to its aromatic virtue in the making of honey wines. In the United States, Meadowsweet and allied species have been used in landscape and garden plantings, sometimes thriving in the deep shade of Redwood forest (*Sequoia sempervirens*).

The root, flower and leaf are the portions used in magic and medicine. The blossoms contain salicylic acid, from which aspirin was first synthesized; as such its medicinal virtues are notable as a diaphoretic, febrifuge, anti-inflammatory, and anti-rheumatic. The herb also possesses diuretic activity and has been used in folk medicine as an antidepressant. A tea of the flower tops is diaphoretic in action but will also treat upset stomachs or gastric ulcers. A strong infusion will suffice, and the blossoms may also be simmered in wine. Meadowsweet has also been used to treat diabetes and certain blood disorders.

It is principally governed by Jupiter, owing to its association with human mirth, but it also emanates some attributes of Venus, in both her aright and averse forms. As used in occult operations, its native powers are Love, Lust, Harmony, Marriage, Fidelity, and Transmutation. The herb, when skillfully compounded in tincture form, may be taken in quantities to provoke dreams, or added judiciously to dreaming-brews with other herbs of twilight. However, its strength and clarity of vision is such that it may be used alone.

Some plant traditions in the British Isles maintain that it is foolhardy to fall asleep in a field of Meadowsweet, as the herb is known for occasional malevolence, and can kill persons who slumber amidst its psychic sphere. Other lore accounts it as an unlucky plant and its flowers are forbidden from inclusion in bouquets.

These malign attributions may derive in part from the heady aromas the plant emanates, and how they can suffuse the head and body, permeating the senses to a disturbing degree. Bewitchment is an apt metaphor for such plant characteristics, which despite their sensual appeal, may overwhelm human consciousness and sense of self control. This particular feature of Meadowsweet is shared with other potent flowers, notably Neroli and Jasmine.



MESCAL BEAN

Dermatophyllum secundiflora

Fabaceæ (Pea Family)

THE Mescal Bean is a small tree native to the southwestern United States and northeastern Mexico, growing to 5 meters, with pinnately compound leaves and fragrant flowers of a dull pink or light violet color. These blossoms give rise to a woody pod of silver-gray colour, covered by a soft down, and bearing 3–8 hard beans within. Although the beans are often referred to as orange in color in some texts, they range from orange to bright red. Also known as Texas Mountain Laurel, it adapts well to the garden as a botanical specimen, and in some municipalities is planted as a landscape tree. Until recent trends of taxonomic revision, the Mescal Bean was formerly classed in the genus *Sophora*, and still is in some systems.

An extensive complex of sacred power has attended on the tree and its seeds for many millennia, as attested by archaeology. Cults of the Red Bean, utilizing psychoactive preparations of the seed, thrived among Native Americans, with the Delaware, Apache, Comanche, Kansa, Ponca, Wichita, Tonkawa, Omaha, Pawnee, Oto, Kiowa, Iowa, Kickapoo, and Osage nations among the reverent. Its magical uses encompassed purification, divination and prophecy, protection, initiation, and as an inductor of visionary phantasmagoria. Purificatory use of the poison brought on drastic purgation of the upper and lower gastrointestinal tract, as well as extreme torpor and disordering of eyesight. It is generally believed that Peyote, as it was disseminated north of its endemic range, gradually replaced the beans in a number of these ceremonies.

In one report of the Iowa Red Bean Ceremony, individual beans were placed before the fire and slowly roasted until they assumed a golden hue; they were then pounded into a medicine brew and drunk. Though there are a great many other accounts of the Beans bequeathing the seeker with vision, this account mentions only ceremonial purgation and praying.

Beyond their use in the Red Bean ceremonies, the individual seeds themselves were regarded as powerful fetishes. As talismans, the beans were carried on the person for protection from injury and accident. Seeds were carried by Comanche medicine men as protection against pollution from menstrual blood. The Omaha employed the magical virutes of the bean for hunting, and to assure triumph in war. Among the Pawnee, members of the Deer Dance Society attributed all animal powers to visions given by the Bean. The Spanish explorer Álvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca related that the native peoples of the American southwest regarded the bean with such esteem that they were used as articles of trade, much as coins. An endemic Hawaiian species with golden flowers known as Mamane (*Sophora chrysophylla*) was valued for the durable properties of its wood, which also held the power of warding off evil.

> Mystical associations with the bean are abundant. It is said that the beans have sexes and breed. Thus if one put aside a dozen beans one should not be surpised to return to this cache and find several dozen beans.
>
> WILLIAM EMBODEN
> *Narcotic Plants*, 1972

Sophora secundiflora entered my consciousness as a child; the velvety silver-gray pods, otherworldly in their elongated shapes, beckoned from the trees like outlaw fruit in the heat of the south Texas summer. Children were admonished to avoid them, so we were told, because poisoning, and many other forms of damnation, would result. Though I personally never knew of such poisonings, this rumor of the Bean's sinister characteristics was widespread, even in the suburbs, and was likely was the remnant of cattle ranching knowledge, gained from generations of interaction with the land.

Even more visually alluring than the pods were the hard, red seeds, marble-sized, which shattered from the dehisced pods, brightening the ground like droplets of blood. These were collected for purposes of annoyance: because of their exceedingly hard seed coats, the beans could be rubbed vigorously on concrete or stone, the friction generating a blistering heat which would then be stealthily transferred to an unsuspecting playmate's arm or leg. A scream or scuffle was the invariable result, followed by a painful blister. For this reason, they were known to children as 'hot beans'. Despite repeated warnings about their poisonous nature, we collected them and carried them in our pockets for good luck. Justification for this use had no rationale, but seemed to be a kind of common sense gained from looking upon the seed itself, combined with the allure which naturally surrounded something so tiny, beautiful, and potentially deadly.

> The only reported human intoxication resulted from the self-administration of the powder from one quarter of a Sophora speciosa seed. The experimenter developed headache, peristhesias,

> light-headedness, and difficult in walking in two hours followed by diarrhea.
>
> M. J. ELLENHORN & D. G. BARCELOUX
> *Medical Toxicology: Diagnosis and Treatment of Human Poisoning*, 1988

It has been widely claimed that consumption of 1–3 whole beans is sufficient to kill a person. When studying the seed and its potentials, the subject of ethnopharmacological scrutiny has been cytisine $C_{11}H_{14}N_2O$, a toxic alkaloid from the same chemical group as nicotine, strongly emetic in nature. While this single isolated principle has repeatedly been dismissed by science as lacking any visionary virtues, one must remember that certain herbs have been similarly repudiated in the past, only to be 'legitimized' as psychoactives through laboratory studies at a later date, as in the case of Diviner's Sage.

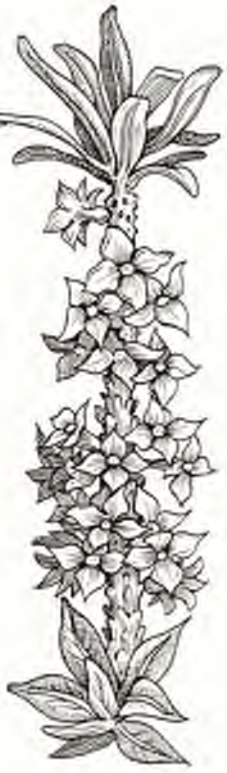
In the annals of occult herbalism, the most salient writing on the psychoactive properties of *Sophora secundiflora* from a non-native context are those of Dale Pendell in *Pharmako/Gnosis* (2005). Here he relates the transformation of poet Philip Daughtry into the boisterous god-possessed figure of *Riverman*, while under the influence of the bean. While the symptomology of Mescal Bean intoxication revealed in the text accords in many ways with the scattering of ethnopharmacological reports, it transcends them by virtue of its diablerie, sensorial description and sense of *otherness*. Years before the book was written, Pendell relayed a more complete version of this story to me in person, and his ability to embody Riverman strongly suggested the power of the spirit of the Bean to transmigrate beyond the plant and its initial medium, into the poet as secondary host. Whether trance-possession, masking, or *poiesis*, the presence of the entity was undeniable, and exhibited other features such as facial expressions, gesticulation and poise—somatic contortions which were consistent with—and more deeply revealing than—clinical reports of cystsine derangement.

MEZEREON

Daphne mezereum

Thymeleaeceæ (Fibre Bark Family)

A POISON of ancient repute, the shrub also known as *māzariyūn* is native to Eurasia, with leaves somewhat resembling those of Laurel, lilac colored flowers, and bright red berries. Reaching a height of 1–1.5 meters, it grows at higher elevations in limestone-rich soil. Its flowers are highly aromatic, and their fragrance, despite its sweetness, possesses a beguiling, inexplicably maddening quality. The genus *Daphne*, to which it belongs, contains 90 accepted species.



Known in the traditions of medieval Arabian pharmacology, it is found in *The Dispensatory of Ibn-at-Tilmīd* and prescribed against dropsical conditions. The related species *Daphne linearifolia* (Spurge Laurel) is used in Arabian ethnomedicine and is known to cause intestinal disturbance. *Daphne oleoides*, known in Punjabi folk medicine as Kutilal, is sometimes identified with Mezereon, and is used topically for cutaneous afflictions, especially eczema. *Daphne gnidium* is a topical pesticide and is rubbed onto the heads of children to prevent lice. The fruits have notoriety as a suicide poison.

The plant was also an ingredient of several fatal poisons in Ibn Wahshiya's *Book of Poisons*, including one compounded from the cremated flesh of a crocodile and the blood of a poisonous snake.

> Its absorbs the moisture of the blood effectively and kills quickly. Whoever takes it experiences a greenness, blueness, and paleness in color, violent pain which begins in his belly and his sides, strong pain in the liver, and intense suffering and difficulty in breathing. Anxiety befalls him and his lips blacken. If he be treated quickly, he is saved.
>
> IBN WAHSHIYA AL NABATI
> *Book of Poisons*, 900 CE

All parts of the plant are poisonous, and the scarlet drupes have been lethal to unsuspecting children who ate them. Even the scent itself carries traces of daphnetoxin. Contact dermatitis is common, as is a choking sensation after handling plant parts. One of its most important active poisons is Daphnin ($C_{15}H_{16}O_9$), one of a number of dihydroxycoumarin glycosides common to the genus. Also present is the diterpene ester Mezerein ($C_{38}H_{38}O_{10}$), itself a skin irritant and teratogen.

Though possessing the veils of Venus, beneath them the shrub is strongly aligned with the planetary efflux of Saturn, and its magical uses accord to this power. Besides its venefic properties, its occult nature is exorcistic and apotropaic. It is also used as an incense; at Midsummer, the Ait Yusi of Morocco burn leaves and twigs of *Daphne gnidium* as a purificatory smoke. Bark-infusions of Mezereon and Rowan were used in Polish and Ukrainian love magic.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF MEZEREON

Dissimulation, Discontinuity, Giddiness, Vesication, Trembling, Staggering, Execrable Appeal, Cloying Sweetness, Malignant Grace, Forbidding Haughtiness, Cloistered Hostility, Precarious Temptation, and Venomous Masks.

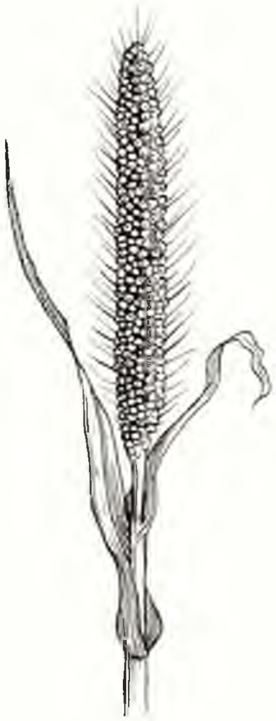
MILLET

Pennisetum glaucum

Poaceæ (Grass Family)

MILLET is of the genus *Pennisetum*, well known to the gardener for its hardy ornamental grasses, general growing to half a meter and producing edible, nutritious seeds. It is a grain with a long history in agriculture, with evidence of cultivation in African and India as early as 2000 BCE. The seed is the principal portion of concern in magic and as a foodstuff, throughout Africa it remains an important food crop to date.

Sorghum, whose broomlike stalks were identified by the Italian *Benandante* as the weapons of the witches, is a form of Millet. Records of Hungarian folk magic and beliefs reveal that witches travelled by squeezing their spirits into tiny spaces, including Walnut shells and husks of Millet. From the same region we hear legends of Fairy-Sabbats, at which ten seeds of Millet fed the entire company of witches.



Black varieties were, according to lore, prized by Basque witches for making their ritual cakes and powders, into which was sometimes mixed with the skillfully desiccated liver of an unbaptized child. The sinister black loaf of the Basque witches may relate to the suspect loaves consumed by the poor of medieval Europe, baked from less desirable brown and black flours—as well as infected or hallucinogenic grains—which served as part of the subject of Piero Camporesi's micro-historical study *Bread of Dreams*.

Magically, the plant also carries a close association with the spirits of the dead, and undead. In the Greek village of Alistrati, an incident is recorded in which a person recently dead was suspected of becoming a *vrykolakas*—the undead spirit assimilated, in part, to the vampire. The relatives of the deceased exhumed the corpse and scalded it with boiling oil, then pierced it through the navel with a long nail before re-burying. The grave was then covered in, and millet seeds scattered over it, that, if the vampire came out again, he might waste his time picking up the grains and thus be overtaken by dawn.

A similar charm employing Millet appears in China, though with different rationale: the many grains scattered in coffins or in the grave were intended to provide abundant food and progeny, thereby ensuring the family of the deceased would flourish. In Ethiopia during *Astäsreyo*, the Falasha Day of Atonement, the ceremony of *Emen* commemorates the dead by leaving out a handful of Millet seeds on stones, so that birds may gather them.

A macabre method of ensuring a good crop was used by the Lange of Uganda at a festival held every five years. On this occasion a raid was conducted on neighboring tribe; a tribesman and his dog were killed and their generative organs duly severed. The scrotum of the man and dog were then stuffed with Millet seed. A rain-dance was performed and the grain, which had been used for stuffing, was then shared out. The men took this specially-treated seed home and mixed it with the regular seed before sowing; the results were said to yield crops of remarkable quality.

MINT

Mentha spp.
Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

THE original water-witch, Mint dowses for wetness, extending far-flung aventitious rooted stems in search of moisture, even in trace amounts. Mints of all types possess fragrant leaves, being green, sometimes glaucous or expressing a violet color, tolerating both sun and shade, with small purple flower-spikes. It possesses all the calling cards of the Lamiaceæ: stems with square cross-sections, opposite leaves, and very often, strong and complex aromatics. The generic name *Mentha* comes from Menthe, the Greek nymph who was transformed into the plant by the jealous Proserpine, Queen of the underworld. Current taxonomic reckoning accepts about 15-40 different species within the genus, and there are a great many hybrids and cultivars.

Its medicinal principles are stimulant, carminative, stomachic. digestive, and carminative; it remains one of the best natural medicines for stomach upset and reflux of the upper gastrointestinal tract. Peppermint is used to check nausea and foul winds of the gut, as well as to allay upset caused by cathartics. The stimulant properties of Peppermint are somewhat more pronounced than those of Spearmint. The portions used are the fresh leaves and flowers and their essential oil.

Generally, its virtues are aligned with the esoteric qualities of the planet Venus, though some Mints, like Peppermint, are Jovian in character. Its occult uses are Invigoration, Concentration, Potentiation, Purification, Bidding, Wealth, Protection for Children, and Strewing. Its aromatics bring a brightening and arousing influence, suggestive of both cleasing and renewal, and these qualities translate readily to ritual. In both France and Italy, Spearmint is associated with the Virgin Mary.

In Santeria, Mint is traditionally associated with spells of dominance over another person's will. Hebrew synagogues of old strewed the floors with fresh Mint. In Kashmir and Jammu, baths of *Mentha longifolia* are taken prior to undertaking Yatras, or sacred pilgrimages.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF MINT

Coolth, Enlivenment, Epiphany, Refreshment,
Stimulation, Hygiene, Quickening, Sobriety,
Alertness, Configuration, Methodical
Incursion, Sure Arrogation,
and Becalmed Seas.

Of the Art of Strewing

THE common Rush (*Juncus effusus*), a slender plant inhabiting bogs, ditches, and moist ground, was greatly esteemed in Middle Age Europe, and likely prior, as essential for the sacred act of strewing—casting plants upon the earth. Later usages, in ritual and magic—particularly weddings—included other plants, particularly those with pleasant fragrance or bright color. The fresh aromatic plants, when crushed underfoot in procession, release a pleasant scent which becomes an essential ceremonial

STREWING HERBS

PLANT	BOTANICAL	PART	USE
Angelica	*Angelica* spp.	leaves & flowers	Worship, Revelry
Cedar	*Cedrus* spp.	needles	Purification, Funerary
Citrus	*Citrus* spp.	leaves & flowers	Love, Purification
Coriander	*Coriandrum sativum*	leaves & unripe fruits	Love, Revelry
Costmary	*Tanacetum balsamita*	leaves	Purification, Exorcism
Cypress	*Cupressus* spp.	fronds	Funerary
Escallonia	*Escallonia* spp.	leaves	Purification, Worship
Fleabane	*Erigeron* spp.	leaves & flowers	Exorcism
Hyssop	*Hyssopus* spp.	leaves & flowers	Purification
Lavender	*Lavandula* spp.	leaves & flowers	Purification
Mint	*Mentha* spp.	leaves & flowers	Purification
Myrtle	*Myrtus communis*	leaves	Love, Marriage, Communion
Stinging Nettle	*Urtica dioica*	whole fresh plant	Funerary, Warfare
Pearly Everlasting	*Gypsophila* spp.	flowering tops	Love, Marriage, Worship
Pennyroyal	*Mentha pugelum*	leaves and flowers	Purification
Perovskia	*Perovskia* spp.	leaves	Worship, Revelry
Pine	*Pinus* spp.	needles	Purification, Funerary
Rose	*Rosa* spp.	petals, buds	Love, Marriage, Revelry, Worship
Rosemary	*Salvia rosmarinus*	leaves	Purification
Sage	*Salvia* spp.	leaves	Purification, Worship
Sagebrush	*Artemisia tridentata.*	leaves & flowers	Purification, Funerary
Sassafras	*Sassafras albidum*	leaves	Worship, Revelry
Savory	*Satureja* spp.	leaves	Purification, Funerary
Tansy	*Tanacetum vulgare*	leaves & flowers	Purification, Funerary
Thuja	*Thuja* spp.	leaves	Purification, Funerary
Thyme	*Thymus* spp.	leaves and flowers	Purification, Worship
Tobacco	*Nicotiana* spp.	Cured leaves	Purification, Funerary, Worship, Warfare

feature. In garden design, the concept is utilized in scented pathways, where hardy low-growing herbs such as Thyme or Chamomile are planted between flagstones and pavers.

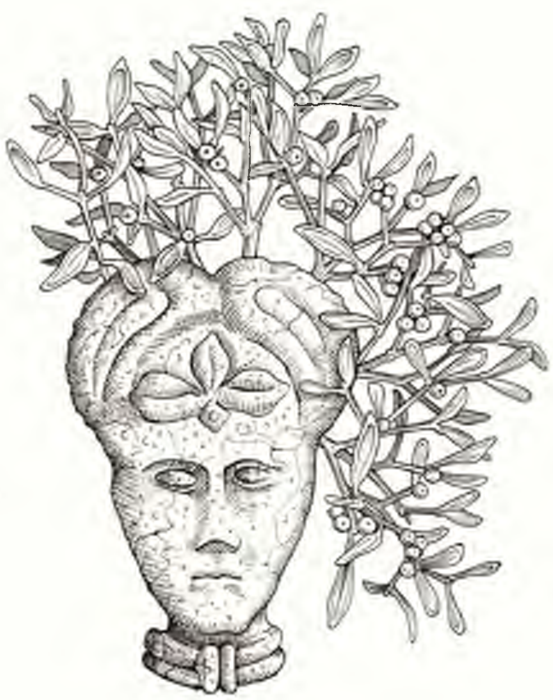
Choice of plants used is driven by their scent, as well as the traditional powers associated with them. Most any fragrant plant may be ritually strewn and trodden, provided it is plentiful, strongly scented, and easily crushed; rubbing the parts between the palms to release their odor serves to demonstrate proof of potential.

In almost all cases, the fragrance of fresh plant parts differs significantly from the same material when dried, as enzymatic action and the process of desiccation chemically alters many aromatic molecules. Some plants, such as Escallonia (*Escallonia* spp.), lose nearly all their intoxicating smell once dry, while others, such as Agrimony, seem to grow more intense on dehydration.

The strewing art, which may be adapted to any ceremony or religious ritual, involves two phases: Casting the fresh plants upon a pathway, floor, or other sacred ground, and then treading them, sometimes barefoot. Depending on the nature of the ceremony, elaborate and artful patterns may be laid out prior to the rite, enhancing aesthetics and unifying the ground with the middle and upper tiers of the ritual arena. Used in sufficient quantity, the right plants, strewn wisely, can perfume a space as strongly as incense. Those treading the plants may do so with shoes, but there is additional benefit by doing so barefoot, as it affords one direct contact with the plants. In some cases, this may serve an initiatic function, as with leaves of Nettle, which both sting and stimulate the flesh, and further extend the plant's ritual power. As a counterpoint to the usually positive magical uses of strewing, some lore relates that witches ritually strewed the ground with weeds, or cursed straw, which would, in some cases have the power to kill those that walked over them.

The preceding table of strewing herbs expands on old traditions and includes some personal favorites, used for many years. As many of these herbs also have medicinal or culinary uses and cohabitate well, they are well worth planting in a dedicated Strewing Garden.

* * *



MISTLETOE

Viscum album
Santalaceæ (Sandalwood Family)

KNOWN in old traditions of plant lore as *Serpent's Skin*, Mistletoe is a hemiparasitic perennial favoring such arboreal hosts as Poplar, Oak and Apple, forming bunched masses in limbs and giving forth white berries in the winter. Older, well-established individuals may possess very hard wood. Formerly classed in its own botanical family Viscaceæ, it has been reclassified as belonging to the Sandalwood family. The Greeks regarded the Mistletoe as a divine distillation of the essence of the Oak, thus it embodied certain powers of Zeus. In ancient Rome, the goddess Fortuna had a specific Mistletoe aspect, Fortuna Viscata.

California Mistletoes include several species in the genus *Phoradendron*, including Oak Mistletoe (*P. villosum*), Big-Leaf Mistletoe (*P. macrophyllum*) and Desert Mistletoe (*P. californicum*). Some grow in extremely arid conditions, and, unlike the European species, dwell upon conifer hosts; I have seen various *Phoradendron* species parasitizing wild California Juniper in San Luis Obispo county. Some data suggests that certain species were used as an abortifacient by indigenous Californian tribes.

Chemical conſtituents of Miſtletoe vary according to the hoſt tree; these may include polypeptides, lectins, polysaccharides, alkaloids, phenolcarboxylic acids, flavonoids, amines, triterpenoids, amino acids, and viscotoxins. As a medicine its actions upon the body are immunotonic, antitumor, anti-cancer, cardiac depressant, sedative, spasmolytic, emmenagogue, and oxytocic. Leaf-infusions have long been used in folk medicine as a tumor inhibitor, as well as to address urinary disorders and nervous conditions. Ancient healers regarded the herb to cure epilepsy and convulsions. Miſtletoe also has repute for regulation of blood pressure and excessive menſtrual flow. In some folk traditions, juice of the herb was thought to increase fertility in women; external use of the berries is beſt in washes for pimples and to loosen ſtiff joints.

Internally used, Miſtletoe berries are toxic, as well as the leaves and ſtems in excessive doses. Lectins and peptidic toxins are the agents responsible: the former agitates the agglutination of red blood corpuscles and, in general, tends to decrease corpuscle counts. Though the plant's toxicity is much touted, documented cases of serious human poisoning are rare. Standardized extract of V. *album* was marketed in Germany as a cytoſtatic, bearing the name Helixor. The massive complex of phytochemicals present in Miſtletoe have drawn considerable intereſt in the arena of pharmaceutical research, and inveſtigations into its potentials as an antineoplaſtic are ongoing.

> Its property is to ſtrengthen the body,
> more than any other plant.
> *The Physicians of Myddfai*

In planetary herbalism Miſtletoe is aligned with the Sun and Jupiter. Its powers in magical operations are Divination, Fertility, Longevity, Invisibility, Protection from Lightning, Summoning, Ward Againſt Noxious Spirits, Protection from Poison, and Opening Locks. In European lore, loci where Miſtletoe grew indicated places of hidden treasure. One Welsh charm placed Miſtletoe under a pillow to conjure prophetic dreams.

The sacred twig was used in Hoodoo charms for protection, and in Slavic magic venerated as a talisman to anul the powers of witches. Parkinson's *Theatrum Botanicum* notes the use of Miſtletoe as a children's amulet, worn around the neck to ward off witchcraft.

In elder Teutonic traditions, Miſtletoe enabled a person to see ghoſts and spirits, and to compel them to speak. A German necromantic operation inſtructed the practitioner to carry a sprig of Miſtletoe into a house afflicted by earthbound spirits, who would be forced to answer all queſtions in the presence of the herb.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF MISTLETOE

Hierogamy, Sacrosanctity, Virility, Coalescence,
Discovery, Amalgamation, Revelation, Diligence,
Countermeasures, Arboreal Bequeſts,
Celeſtial Medicaments,
Wise Use, & Seminal
Vigor.

Some spells have utilized Miſtletoe to open locks. Indeed, the plant served Persephone as a key to unlock the gates of the underworld. In Scandinavian lore, the god Baldur was slain by a dart of Miſtletoe, hurled by Loki, a Breton syncretism of the myth of Baldur holds that Miſtletoe provided the wood for the Cross upon which Chriſt was executed. The herb may also be implicated in the funerary rites in ancient Celtic Britain, as a coffin was discovered in a Bronze Age tumulus containing significant quantities of a plant identified as Miſtletoe.

The herb was long under the ban of the Chriſtian church due to its veneration among the older religions. Despite its ſtatus as contraband, its inſtrinsic virtue was recognized by Chriſtian monks who, chriſtening it Wood of the Cross, ate chips or drank decoctions of it, and wore small bits of it on their persons as disease-conquering amulets. A virtuous tincture can be made with the dried leaves and twigs, which lend a rich sweetness to any ethanolic menſtruum. Although we are informed that it is poison, such was my daily fortification for well over a decade with no ill effect. Although many diverse species were available to me, the beſt was certainly V. *album*, the venerated medicine of Old Britain.

Pliny records Roman women employing Miſtletoe as a fertility charm, by carrying a sprig on the person. A potent love-drawing powder was made from one part leaves of Miſtletoe and two parts each of ground Elecampagne and Vervain. A tiny pinch of this magical duſt was then added to food or drink, to bewitch the one desired. Similiarly, a philter of Vervain and Mistletoe was regarded to inflame lust. Adornment of the body with Mistletoe was an old English fertility charm, allied to the Yuletide tradition of kissing beneath its boughs. Of more recent magical vintage, folk magicians of the Ozark Mountains compound the leaves and stems of the plant into love philtres.

Following Druidic practices, Mistletoe should be gathered on the sixth day of the waning moon. For use as an anti-hypertensive, some folk traditions hold that the best Mistletoe is gathered from a Willow tree in January. Mistletoe growing on arboreal hosts of Oak, Apple, Rowan and Hawthorn are of especial esteem for use in the magical arts.

CORRESPONDENCES

Essence: Potentiation
Powers: Healing, Protection, Allure, Fertility, and Gnosis.
Element: All.
Planet: Sun.
Deific Forms: Baldur, Freya, Zeus, Fortuna.
Alchemical Concept: Quinta Essentia.
Divine Appellation: All-Heal.
Virtue: Synthesis.
Body Part: Marrow.
Therapeutic: Sovereignty.
Affliction: Codependence.
Domain: The High Branch.
Eponymous Compounds: Viscumin.
Embodied State: Wood-Wife.
Emblem: A Tree Nymph arrayed in white and green, bearing a winged flask and a golden sickle.

MONARDELLA

Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

AN underappreciated genus of wild mints, having about three dozen species and characterized by bright flowers and complex leaf fragrances. Although each species varies slightly in its aromatic profile, the general characteristics of the leaves' odor include camphor, pinene, and varied floral notes, resulting in a sophisticated, primordial perfume. The genus is particularly well represented in California, and several species are remote in distribution, or critically endangered. In Native American folk medicine, where its curative powers were most extensively accessed, it was used for teas to ease gastric upset, as a febrifuge, and a general cold remedy. In the role of fragrant spice, it also serves well in potpourri and aromatic baths. Ritually, the Mondardellas possess cleansing influence, much in the manner of Hyssop and Pennyroyal, particularly in the forms of a strong infusion, hysdrosol or essential oil. Karok women used Mountain Pennyroyal (*M. odoratissima*) as a love charm, and other sacred uses are attested. Despite their wilderness distribution, the Monardellas will heartily accept invitation into garden and arboretum environments, with Coyote Mint (*M. villosa*) and *M. odoratissima* being outstanding examples. All Monardellas excel as butterfly plants and thus better the medicine garden as an extended semi-wild habitat.

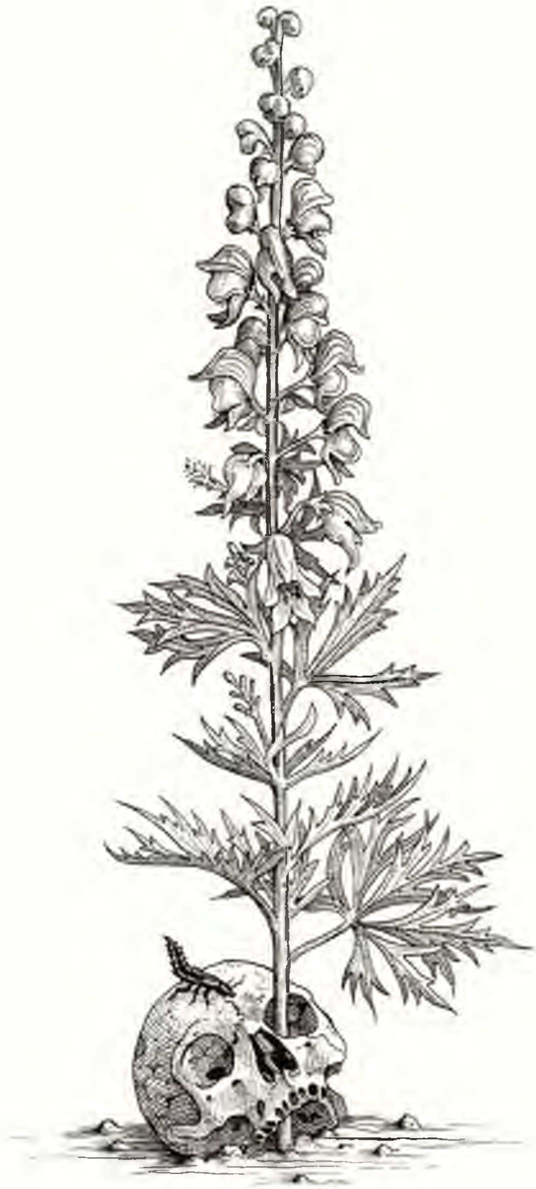
MONKSHOOD

Aconitum napellus, Aconitum spp.
Ranunculaceæ (Buttercup Family)

THE relation of Monkshood to humanity is defined by millennia of dread, wonder and rapt fascination, in part due to the strength of its deadly poison. Together with the Apple and the Mandrake, its place in European traditions as a plant synonymous with sorcery is firmly cemented, a living botanical embodiment of the enchanter's art.

The plant's magical ipseity is underscored by its handsome yet unnerving appearance. A montane herbaceous perennial growing to one meter in height, the plant receives its name from its deep azure cowl-shaped flowers, suggestive of a cloaked face. It has dark green, deeply divided palmate leaves. Its young root is of pale appearance, darkening to brown with age; the follicular fruit capsule contains many tiny seeds, usually black in color. Another European species, *A. lycotonum* (Yellow Wolfsbane) is distinguished by its yellow bell-shaped flowers. In Europe, *A. napellus* flourishes in Germany, the Swiss Alps, and the Tyrol. During the first and second world wars, much of the native habitat of European Monkshood was destroyed. A successful and diverse genus, *Aconitum* contains 330 accepted species, the whole of which is endemic to mountainous areas of the northern hemisphere. All are toxic.

In antiquity it was said to have sprung from the infernal banks of the Acheron, or, alternatively, from the dripping jowls of Cerberus. According to tradition, Monkshood was used in the



poisoned wine with which Medea attempted to kill Theseus. Ground root powder of *Aconitum kongboense* is used as an arrow poison among the Lhoba hunters of Tibet. An Arabic epithet for the plant is *khaneq al-theb,* or 'Wolf Strangler.' In an early example of drug prohibition, it was a crime to own Aconite plants in the time of Theophrastus, so feared was its venom and the poisoners who would employ it.

> If the Kings of India wished to betray enemy kings, they accustom a girl from her childhood to Aconite, by strewing it for a time under her cradle, then under her rug, then under her clothes, and continue gradually until the girl can consume Aconite without harm. In this way she develops a tolerance for it. The girl is then sent with presents to the king whom it is wished to betray, and if they copulate, he dies.
>
> ZAKARIYAH AL-QAZWINI

Rich in hostile alkaloids, as well as non-nitrogenous compounds, the entire plant contains toxic principles, but the most venomous portions are the root and leaves. Concentration of poison varies from plant to plant, even within a single species of *Aconitum.* Poison control and medical data continue to report accidental human poisonings every year, even amongst gardeners and so-called 'plant experts'.

Despite its penchant for felling both human and beast, the herb is an entrenched historical staple of folk medicines and official pharmacopoeias. Correctly tempered as a drug, it is a powerful dermal anodyne and antirheumatic, and minute amounts are effective. Aconitic Acid, a constituent of Monkshood, is one of about 600 extraneous adulterants added to Tobacco by major cigarette manufacturers.

Table of Select Monkshood Poisons

ALKALOID	FORMULA
Aconitine	$C_{34}H_{47}NO_{11}$
Pseudoaconitine	$C_{36}H_{51}NO_{11}$
Hypoaconitine	$C_{33}H_{45}NO_{10}$
Mesaconitine	$C_{33}H_{45}NO_{11}$
Jesaconitine	$C_{35}H_{49}NO_{12}$
Isoaconitine	$C_{35}H_{49}NO_{11}$
Neopelline	$C_{33}H_{45}NO_{6}$

Its powers in sorcery most often encompass Death, Coercion, Warfare, and Invisibility, though it it also present in a number of Love charms and ritual of Hunting. In Poland and Ukraine, Monkshood was a valued demonifuge and one variety known as *toja* (*Aconitum* × *cammarum*) was planted in gardens to prevent the intrusion of Satan. In India parts of the plant were carried on the person as a talisman against disease.

Taoist sex magic made use of Fu-Zi (*A. carmichaelii*) in combination with oyster shells, travertine, and other herbs to create the much esteem'd Hanshi, or Five Mineral Powder, a stimulating aphrodisiac taken in brandy. Robert Svoboda's seminal work *At the Left Hand of God* reports usage of the *bisma* or 'Mother of Poisons'

(*Aconitum ferox*) by the Aghori of India, smoked in combination with cannabis; the same plant also has traditional Indian use for well poisoning, and the envenomation of arrow tips and spearheads.

The Spirit-Retinue of Monkshood

Domination, Extermination, Repression, Murder, Withering, Paroxysm, Paraesthesia, Deadening Heat, Agonized Contortion, Scorched Earth, Infernal Vaults, Contaminated Wells, and Terminal Exhalation.

In the mind 1990s, when conducting research into the 'flying ointment' of the medieval witches, I was given a large bottle of compounded oil of *Aconitum columbianum* root, a Monkshood native to North America, mostly inhabiting mountainous areas west of the Rockies. This came from a medical herbalist who had recently completed his clinicals before moving to California. This concentrated oil was potentiated by the presence of Ginger, with which it was compounded in order to aid dermal absorption. Though the oil was initially a useful contributor to my flying ointment research, an excruciating foot injury quickly revealed its better use as medicine, for the oil was able to relieve soft tissue pain when other drugs would not.

CORRESPONDENCES
Powers: Death, Invisibility, Lust, Hunting, and Coercion.
Planets: Saturn, Pluto.
Element: Fire or Water, depending on use.
Deific Forms: Hekate, Hades.
Virtue: Efficacy.
Body Part: Nerves.
Medicine: Analgesia.
Poison: Extermination.
Emblem: A wolf-skull nestled within a monk's cowl, surmounted by crossed arrows.

MOONWORT

Botrychium lunaria
Ophioglossaceæ (Adder's Tongue Family)

A DECIDUOUS fern to 15 cm in height, Moonwort is hued in a pale, mesmerizing green with distinctive, crescent-shaped leaves, succulent in appearance. It bore the folk name *Grape Fern* due to the clustered appearance of its spore sacs. The fern grows on meadows, heaths, and other alkaline soils; the type species is found in Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, as well as Northern Europe. Other Moonwort species endemic to North America include Slender Moonwort (*B. lanceolatum*), Small Moonwort (*B. simplex*) and Rattlesnake Fern (*B. virginianum*). It was sometimes called Lunary, though it should not be confused with another similarly named plant, Lunaria (*Lunaria annua*). Medicinally, Moonwort was formerly used as a stypic, demulcent, respiratory aid and in the case of North American species, a topical remedy for snakebite.

> By night it opens up and admits the rays of the moon until it looks like a shining star. The local inhabitants, when they see it, avoid it as an apparition of evil import. Some make poisons with it, some stir up demons, and chemists use it to stabilize their mercury.
>
> JOHANN WEYER
> *De Praestigiis Dæmonum*, 1583

Its predominant planetary correspondence is the Moon. Its magical properties, said to be concentrated most powerfully in the fronds, are Revealing, Illumination, and Opening Locks. The plant also possessed repute for Allure and spells of Attraction. As attested by Paracelsus, it was an ingredient in love-philters; the juice of the leaves, or their distillate, was venerated as a tonic to prolong youth. Owing to the singular strength of its planetary governance, the herb was considered most powerful when gathered by moonlight.

Magical lore relates of the herb a complex of attributes revolving around its power over metals. Because of its celestial sympathy with the Moon, Alchemical lore spoke of its power as a catalyst for metallic transmutation to convert mercury into silver. Horses wending their way across pastures where Moonwort dwelt were thought to fall under its charm, their shoes loosening. The vulgar name for the plant *Unshoe-the-Horse* stands as a mnemonic for this occult property. The plant also enjoyed repute in magical lore as a key which could command locks to open, similar in many respects to the Hand of Glory. It was also thought to be able to liberate prisoners from their shackles.

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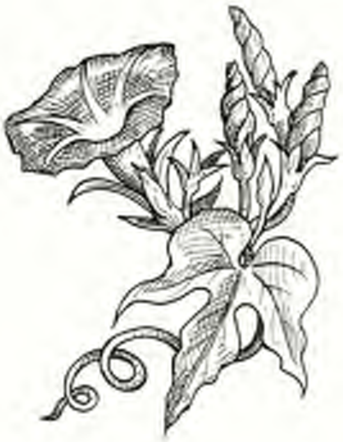


MORNING GLORY

Ipomœa tricolor; Ipomœa spp.
Convulvulaceæ (Bindweed Family)

AN ANNUAL or herbaceous perennial creeping vine native to Mexico, populating clear expanses of ground. Its cordate leaves are an immediate signifier as are the blue, trumpet-shaped flowers. In Mexico, it bears many intereſting names of power including *Tlitliltzin* (Sacred Black Ones) *Quiebraplato* (Plate Breaker); *Mantos de Cielo* (Coat of Heaven) and *Ma'sung-Pahk* (Bones of the Children).

In folk medicine, the psychoactive seeds (which contain ergine [d-lysergic acid amide], isoergine, chanoclavine, elymoclavine, and ergonovine) are eſteemed in small doses as an aphrodisiac, as well as a visionary in indigenous religion. Ergotamine is a well-known chemical virtue for inducing uterine contractions.

Its esoteric powers are Visions, Divination and Protection from Fascination. As with all Bindweeds, the tendrils may be used in magical operations for 'entagling' enemies, or, binding another person to one's will. As a vine easily grown on trellis or wall, it may serve as an effective House Ward. In his enchiridion *Magia Naturalis*, Giambattiſta della Porta writes that Morning Glories

> ...infuse dreams, wherein the Phantasms are broken, crooked, angry, troubled. The person dreaming will seem to be carried in the air, and to see the rivers and sea under him. He shall dream of misfortunes, falling, death, cruel tempeſts, showers of rain, and cloudy days, the sun darkened, and the heavens frowning, and nothing but fearful apparitions.

Cuttings of a Brazilian variety known as Salsa-da-praia *(Ipomœa pes-caprae)* are used to mitigate the effects of the Evil Eye. Fresh sprigs are placed in a vessel of water, while the afflicted places hand over heart and invokes the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghoſt, then utters a prayer to the plant itself. In Eaſt Africa, the Giriama use the leaves of a Morning Glory known as *Mufunga-mambo* as a charm to protect againſt evil spirits, and in India, a garland of Dopati-lata (*Ipomœa bilobata*) is hung on the dwellings of women after childbirth, for protection of their newborn.

In eaſtern North America, the Man-Root Morning Glory (*Ipomœa pandurata*) was considered by the Iroquois to have great powers of magical potentiation, functioning as an adjunct to ſtrengthen or enhance the efficacy of magical operations. The large tubers produced by this species are edible if roaſted, but otherwise are a reliable cathartic. The Bush Morning Glory (*Ipomœa leptophylla*) was employed by the Pawnee of the Great Plains region both as a sedative to allay nervousness and bad dreams, and as a ſtimulant to revive persons who had fainted.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF MORNING GLORY

Faſtening, Attachment, Wantonness, Coquetry, Tarantism, Mythopoesis, Wheedling, Sensual Undulations, Delicious Liaisons, Illuminant Discoveries, Tinted Apocalypses, Earthen Goſpels, and Haunting Visitants.

Over the years, commercially obtained seeds have become notorious for being intentially contaminated with mercuric compounds in order to discourage use as an intoxicant. In this case, the operative wisdom seems to be that it is better to suffer the effects of noxious poisoning than risk the possibility of seeing God. Of course, home-grown seed presents no such obſtacle. These are ready for harveſt when the small seed capsules become brown and papery. An easy way to winnow the seed is by gently crumbling the capsule in the hands and blowing; the heavier black seeds remain while the ephemeral husks float away.

MOTHERWORT

Leonurus cardiaca

Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

Also known as Heartwort, *Leonurus cardiaca* is an herbaceous perennial growing to 1 meter, having pale pink or red flowers. Although clearly possessing many morphological characteristics of the Mint family, its appearance is unusual: its three-lobed leaves somewhat resemble an *Artemisia*, and it is thus an attractive garden specimen. Though originating in Europe, it is naturalized in places beyond, including in the United States, where it is common. Motherwort thrives in the garden, and may become agressive in some locales, colonizing middens and wayside waste patches. The dried aerial portions are the plant parts most used in medicine and ritual, and a serviceable green dye may be extracted from the leaves.

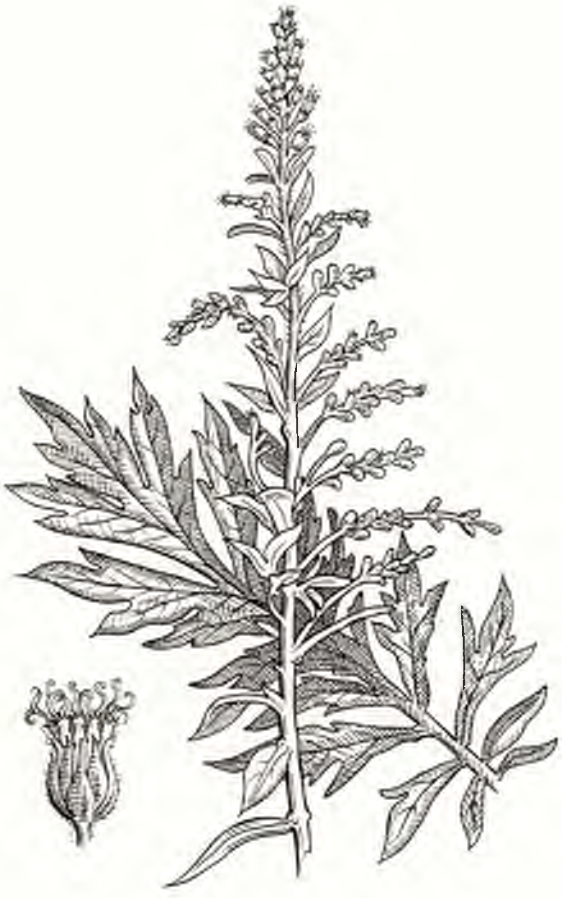
For centuries, the herb has been associated with the heart, as well as commanding respect as a protector of women; plant extracts are valuable folk medicines for nervous complaints and spasms. A warm infusion or decoction of the flowering tops and leaves is beneficial in alleviating suppressed menstruation.

As considered through the lens of astrological herbalism, its planetary ruler is Venus. As used in magic, it has been favored in spells and rites of Protection, as a love charm, and for Exorcism. In some areas of Europe, Motherwort was an esteemed sorcerer's herb considered second only to Vervain. On the Isle of Man, it was a powerful herb of magical protection, and to harness its power at its peak, it was gathered on St. John's Eve. In Japan, the plant is valued for its life-prologing potencies, and it is brewed into beer or sake.

The dried aerial leaves and flowers have been a favored ingredient in smoking mixtures using other cousin species such as Siberian Motherwort (*L. sibiricus*) and Lion's Tail (*Leonotius leonurus*); these plants share a similar phytochemical profile, including the nitrogenous pseudoalkaloid leonurine ($C_{14}H_{21}N_3O_5$). For this purpose, dried leaves may be potentiated by soaking in a strong leaf tincture, then drying.

The effects derived from the smoke are sedative and mildly euphoric, but unambiguous. One enters a paradoxical state of stimulated languor redolent of the hypnagogic state, wherein the entire body—not simply the brain—may more easily be utilized as 'mind'. There is also a relaxed sense of ease, construed by some as 'nurturance', hence the plant's alignment with maternal powers. Though distinct, the plant's emanative qualities also suggest kinship with the unique properties of the psychoactive Lamiaceae, such as *Salvia divinorum* and Clary Sage.

Expansive without being debilitating, the powers of the plant are ideal as an adjuct to trance and ritual. These virtues may also be expressed more subtly, as ambient influence, through an incense, in which the dried leaves of Heartwort are combined with a small amount of mild tree resin, such as Dammar, Burgundy Pitch, or Benzoin, as well as an aromatic wood.



MUGWORT

Artemisia vulgaris

Asteraceæ (Sunflower Family)

Known as *Mater Herbarum* or Mother of Herbs, it is an annual herb growing to 1 meter with three-lobed leaves. Partaking in morphological similarities to plants in the Mint Family, it is more closely allied with daisies, zinnias, and other asteraceous kin. California Mugwort, common to the Western United States, is *Artemisia vulgaris* var. *douglasiana,* and is commonly seen—usually after it is smelled—populating woodlands and riparian corridors.

The portions favored in both magic and medicine are the aerial leaves and stem, best harvested before the plant flowers. Mugwort purchased in commerce is often in crumbled form and hence has lost much of its aromatic qualities and is of dubious value to magic and medicine. For any use, it is far better to grow the Mugwort oneself, or sustainably harvest it in the wild.

In physic, the plant is antispasmodic, carminative, vermifuge, nervine, uterine tonic, emmenagogue, stimulant, and stomachic. Moxa sticks, used in Traditional Chinese Medicine, are made from the young shoots, and like other uses for the plant rely on its ability as a 'blood-mover' or circulatory. The hot tea has diaphoretic and expectorant quality and is of aid in the early stages of flu. It is perhaps best known to allopathic medicine as a uterine stimulant; in early modern medicine, Syrup of Mugwort was used to hasten labor and uterine contractions. The essential oil is an oral toxin and risky abortifacient. Exercise wisdom when using the oil for magical unguents and fragrances, and conservatism when inhaling. In modern times the leaves of the plant are smoked as a mild inebriant in Britain and North America.

When dried, Mugwort readily retains its color and aromatics. Entire plants are harvested just prior to flowering and hung, tops-down from the rafters. When dessicated, store the entire dried plant in an airtight vessel until such time as you are ready to use it, then pluck leaves as needed. Some traditions consider St. John's Eve (June 23rd) the best time to gather Mugwort. In Anglo-Saxon traditions, Mugwort should be harvested just before sunrise, the harvester giving the sign of the cross and the prayer:

✠

Tollam te Artemisia ne lassus sum in via.

The flowering tops of Mugwort may yield valuable dyestuff: yellows, tans, and dark browns may be achieved in combination with alum mordants; the juice of the fresh leaves may be used to impart a grayish color to paper and wood.

> ...it forbids evil leechdoms and also it averts the eyes of evil men.
>
> *Old English Herbarium* V:11

Mugwort's planetary resonances are with Venus and the Moon. As used in magical operations it is associated with a multitude of powers including Clairvoyance, Banishing, Divination, Oneirogenesis, Summoning, Protection from Maleficia, Summoning, Protection for Livestock, Protection from Thieves, Envigoration, Beautification, Longevity, and use as a hunting charm.

The 16th century collection of magical remedies *Thesaurus Pauperum* (Poor Man's Treasury) remarks that Mugwort hung above the door of a house will protect the domicile from evil magic. This echoes the advice of the *Herbarium* of Pseudo-Apulieus, which noted the same charm, over a thousand years prior. In Slavic folk magic, the herb was used to protect from witches.

The Spirit-Retinue of Mugwort

Sagacity, Enthusiasm, Immediation, Glamor, Facilitation, Inspiration, Effusiveness, Virid Warmth, Fragrant Waysides, Mental Idyll, Spirited Redress, Sanguinous Efflux, and Menstrual Wrath.

Juice expressed from Mugwort and other species of *Artemisia* is prescribed in magical formularies for annointing of scrying stones and mirrors, awakening their revelatory properties. Agrippa noted this lucent property, remarking that "...if a smooth shining piece of steel be smeared over with the juice of Mugwort and made to fume, it will make invocated spirits to be seen in it." Although the leaves are not succulent, the juice itself may be expressed by crushing the fresh leaves and rubbing them onto the reflective surface. A concentrated tincture made from the fresh leaves is also a worthy substitute.

Remember, Mugwort, what you have proclaimed,
What you have announced at the solemn
demonstration.
Your name is Una, the oldest of all the worts;
You have power over Three and Thirty,
You have power over poison and infections,

> You have power over the evil that ravages
> the land.
>
> *The Lacnunga*

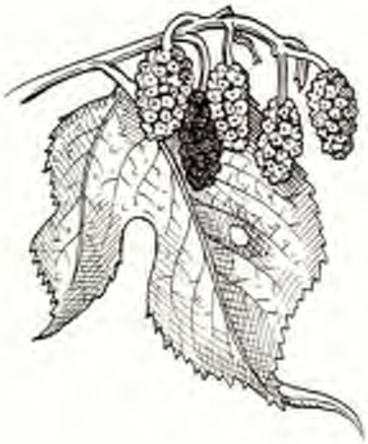
Carried on the person, Mugwort was a medieval charm for reviving fatigued travelers, providing not only refreshment, but also protection and speed to the journey. An old charm to ease weariness instructed the traveler to stuff fresh Mugwort leaves into the shoes, a practice which, given the footsoles' ability to absorb the virtues of plants, may yet be revealed to have sound basis in pharmacy. For those who question the efficacy of this, I commend to them the leaves of A. *douglasiana*, whose penetrating aroma refreshes and stimulates. On long walks, a sprig can be carried for periodic aromatic refreshment, either via smell, taste, or rubbing on the skin.

Mugwort's magical linkage with traveling extends beyond mundane conceptions of journeys to a kind of ritual 'flight'. The notorious grimoire *Clavicula Solomonis* features a spell with magical garters stuffed with Mugwort and the eyes of barbel-fish, combined with a magic rod of holm-oak, to enable the magician to fly.

> Trust my word, seek the grass that is trefoil. Thou knowest the name, and art wise and cunning if thou findest it.
>
> *The Sophic Hydrolith*

I have found the native *Artemisia douglasiana* superior in many ways to the European species, beginning with its aromatic profile, strongly redolent of its 'green aspects' including thujone. Its aromatics are so concentrated that the dead leaves of the plant still retain a strong, fresh smell, even when the chlorophyll has long fled. In California, it is one of our most potent native plants, long venerated by many of this state's indigenous peoples. Women of the Kawaiisu tribes reckoned it as a strong purifying bath to preserve youth and beauty, and the plant was also used to purify husband and wife after childbirth. Mugwort was also used as a powerful hunting charm. Its use as a smoking material akin to Tobacco has been documented among the Kashaya Pomo.

CORRESPONDENCES
Powers: Revelation, Protection, Blessing.
Element: Earth.
Planet: Venus and Moon.
Star: Algol (β Persei).
Virtue: Envigoration.
Deific Forms: Eileithyia and Artemis.
Domain: Domestic Garden.
Body Part: Womb/Uterus.
Therapeutic: Holism/Integration.
Affliction: Efflux/Hemmhorrage.
Embodied State: Trance/Dreaming.
Emblem: A heart-shaped vessel with a human eye engraved upon it, emitting a cloud filled with visions.



MULBERRY

Morus spp.
Moraceæ (Mulberry Family)

MORUS, comprising the True Mulberries, contains 14 accepted species of deciduous trees, growing to 15 meters in height, and producing edible fruits. Being monoecious, it has both male and female flowers, the former being a green catkin, and the latter developing into the enlogated berry. *M. nigra*, the Black Mulberry, is prevalent in the folklore of Southeastern Europe, though its range of domestication is believed to be further east in Iran. North America has two important native species, the Red Mulberry (*M. rubra*) and Texas Mulberry (M. *celtidifolia*). Mulberries are found in the wild and in cultivation. The generic name is derived from *mouria* (μουριά) the ancient Greek name for the tree.

The wood, bark, leaves, flowers, and berries are all valued for diverse uses. The leaves of White Mulberry (*M. alba*) are commericially important for the rearing of silkworms. The wood of various species is hard and durable, being worked for small objects such as tool handles and sculpture.

The fruits are an important food crop, and a source of Vitamin C, especially those of *M. nigra*. Red Mulberry (*Morus rubra*), a North American species, provided a root-decoction used as a stimulant and emetic by the Creek tribe. The wood of *M. nigra* is boiled for a traditional Italian dye, rendering an earthy yellow-green. Despite its versatility and the wholesomeness of its offerings, the tree is often scorned as an invasive weed.

As with the Elder, Mulberry may rightly be regarded as an aroboreal medicine chest. Folk medicine regards Mulberry as anti-inflammatory and diuretic; an infusion of the leaves arrests the noisome symptoms of diarrhea. The bark and root bark are powerful allies against human malady, especially pulmonary complaints, but are also the source of burgeoning scientific interest in anti-cancer research. The tree contains an array of significant organic compounds including morin, morusin, mulberrin, cyclomulberrin, kuwanones, mulberrofurans, mulbofuranes, and sanggenones. Morusin ($C_{25}H_{24}O_6$), also known as mulberrochromene, is an antineoplastic; and kuwanone G, derived from *Morus alba*, is an antibacterial.

Mulberry is aligned with Mercury, and its occult powers are Wisdom, Protection and Healing. As a living entity, the tree embodies a watchful and protective presence, as well as an axis of fixation for malediction. In his *Emblemata* of 1531, the legal humanist Andrea Alciati lists Mulberry as the emblem of 'prudent reserve'. It has some degree of diabolic association as suggested in European folklore, in which the black berries were prized by the Devil for darkening his boots. The stain actually provided by the fruits is in fact a dark red or purple; The juice of the berries thus serve well as a ritual stain for ornamenting the face and body. In Albanian magic, the buds were used against the Evil Eye.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF MULBERRY

Integrity, Adroitness, Versimilitude, Hardiness, Nurturance, Shrewdness, Prepotence, Profusion, Ancient Compact, Wise Delay, Bountiful Stores, Miserly Reserve, Imperturbable Solidity.

In Mexico, *Morus celtidifolia* is one of several botanical sources of the traditional bark paper known as Amate, best known as the material comprising the pages of the Mayan and Aztec codices. Certain uses of Amate were magical or ceremonial, used in some instances to make poppets. Mulberry bark yielded white paper, used for love and protection spells, while the bark of a wild Fig yielded a dark paper, used for malevolent sorcery. Because of Amate's connection to its tree of origin, the dolls are considered allied to plant spirits of forest and field, and poppets often represent an individual plant genius, such as the Banana, the Tomato, and the Bean. The dolls are consecrated to their purpose by fumigation with Copal incense, the socerer breathing the smoke into the poppets' mouths.

MULLEIN

Verbascum thapsis

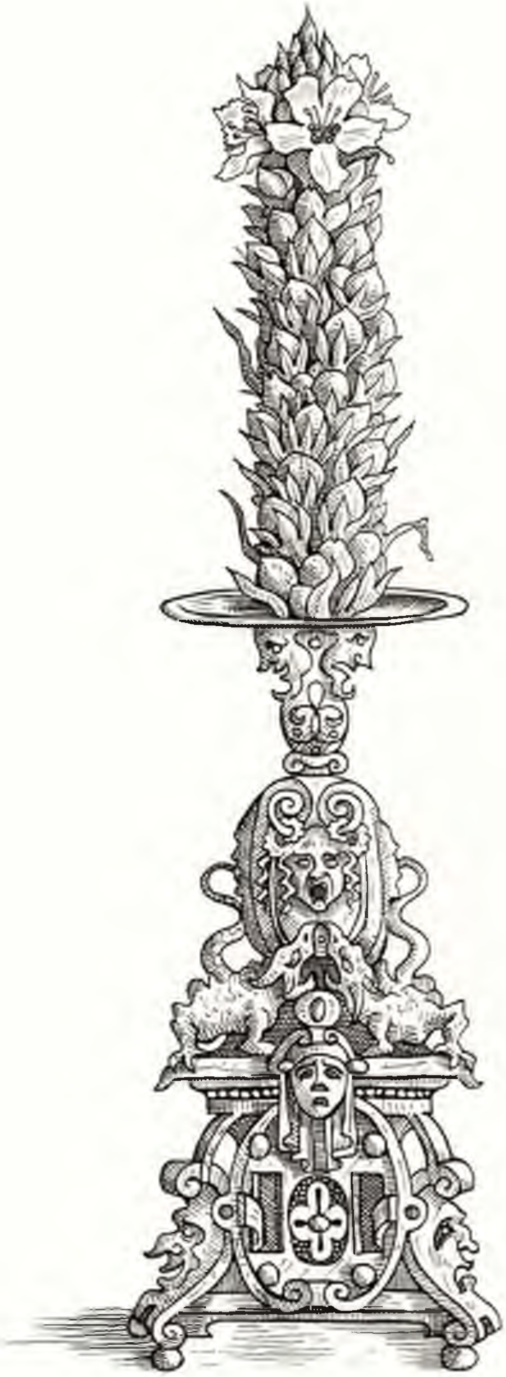
Scrophulariaceæ (Figwort Family)

A ROADSIDE biennial herb to 2 meters in height, with glaucous, downy leaves and a towering, spearlike inflorescence bearing many honey-scented yellow blossoms. The blossoms are followed by a crowded capsule bearing numerous tiny seeds. Mullein is an Old World native, and an introduced plant in North America and Australia. In the United States, it is a common wayside plant, seen haunting the roadsides of our great Pacific Northwest. It is known as Hag's Taper or Witch's Candle, owing to its efficacy as a vegetable torch. In Eastern Europe, in addition to common Mullein, various species were used as a fish poison including *V. phlomoides*, *V. blattaria*, and *V. glabratum*.

Verbascum is a large genus containing approximately 125 different species, with many more unresolved or unassessed. All are allied in their occult properties, and worthy of magical investigation. In my own garden, I also include Black Mullein (*Verbasum nigrum*) and Temptress Purple (*V. phoenicium*), as well as the otherworldly hybrid *Verbascum* 'Southern Charm'.

The portions used are the flowers and leaves, and, occasionally, an oil made from the blossoms. Mullein offers many folk medicinal properties including use as an astringent, diuretic, antispasmodic, expectorant, anti-inflammatory, calmative, antibiotic, anodyne, sedative, and expectorant. Valued by herbalists as an excellent medicament for all pulmonary disorders, Mullein is used to combat coughs, athsma, pneumonia, and catarrh. A strong infusion makes an excellent gargle for sore throat and inflamed tonsils. The root is diuretic, while the mucilaginous flowers may be compounded as a balm to soften the skin. The fresh leaves, soaked in hot water and employed as a poultice, treat rheumatism and swollen joints. In Canadian folk medicine, the dry leaves are smoked for asthma.

It is chiefly accorded the virtues of Saturn, a correspondence shown by its dominion over rotten spirits, and its curious resonance with-witchcraft and the infernal dead. Yet it also manifests attributions of the Sun, a planetary influence readily apparent in its form and habit. Erect, golden and greasy, Mullein emanates the outward qualities of the Solar Phallus, suffused with heliacal fire. This being so, it is a fire that burns best amidst a Saturnian gloom.



Verbascum thapsis

For the purposes of the magical arts, it serves as a demonifuge, a ward against noxious spirits, and for protection against disease. The plant has also enjoyed used in operations of malevolence, and as a love-charm, particularly as an ingredient in love-philters.

The 4th century CE Greek Magical text *Cyranides* gives a formula for a necromantic ring of Nemesis, whose consecrated stone conceals behind it a dove's wing-tip and a portion of Mullein, which was also known by the moniker *nekudia* or *nekua* 'death-plant'. Among many divinatory functions, the ring was said to reveal to the wearer the number of years of his life, as well as the circumstances of his own death.

In both European and Asian magical traditions, Mullein was held to possess the power to chase demons and obnoxious spirits. Bundled leaves or flower-spikes, suspended over the bed, were used as a talisman to protect against nightmares, succubi, incubi, and other noxious spirits of the night. Planted by the front door of the home, it serves as a house-ward, repelling malign spirits and visits by unwelcome persons. Leaves of Wavy-leaf Mullein (*Verbascum sinuatum*) are documented as being burned as a magical incense for protection; in Kashmiri folk magic, the leaves and flowers are used to ward off the Evil Eye.

Roots are gathered prior to flowering. Flowers are collected in mid to late summer, gathered mid-morning in dry, sunny weather. Individual blossoms should be quickly dried in a warm place with vigorous air circulation, then stored in an airtight vessel. Roots of Mullein, gathered on a Friday night between the 15th of August and the 8th of September, on a waning moon, were used as a powerful charm against lightning.

MUSTARD

Sinapis alba—White Mustard
Brassica nigra—Black Mustard
Brassicaceæ (Cabbage Family)

MUSTARD refers to two plants, given the common names of White and Black. Although not closely related, both are annual plants with yellow flowers, producing abundant seeds used as a spice. Although the green, immature seed pods and seeds are valued for culinary use, the latter are the portions employed in magic.

Mustard is governed by the two planetary agents of fire, the Sun and Mars, and these qualities are present in the plant's action as a rubefacient and a warming spice. In California, its Martial aspect is reflected in its prowess as an invasive species, where it is a rapid colonizer after wildfires, quickly usurping native species through such strategies as allelopathy.

Its powers as used in magic and ritual are Exorcism, Cursing, Fertility, Attraction, and Vigor. Mustard seeds are exponentiators of ritual power, meaning that their presence strengthens the rudiments of a given magical operation. They are expansive in nature, and a frequent component of seed-scattering spells whose primary purpose is to dispel evil or confuse repugnant spirits. The seeds are also used for deity-generation rituals in Buddhist tantras.

We find the plant's power of cursing attested in an old Coptic spell of the seventh century CE, exacted to cause a person to flee his home. The prayer of the magician's desire was recited over a wild mustard plant; the herb was then uprooted and then cast upon the victim's doorstep.

In Mexico, Mustard prevents the intrusion of the *gente de chusma*, spirits who have sold their souls to the Devil, into the home. Having a similar constitution to fairies, they are barred from the home by painting prepared Mustard on the wall in the sign of a cross. Seeds may be scattered around the bedside as nocturnal protection from molesting spirits.

In northwest India, Mustard seeds were strewn for protection against a rank demon called a *Hadal*, which arose from the spirit of a woman who died within ten days of childbirth or during menstruation.

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MYRRH

Commiphora myrrha
Burseraceæ (Torchwood Family)

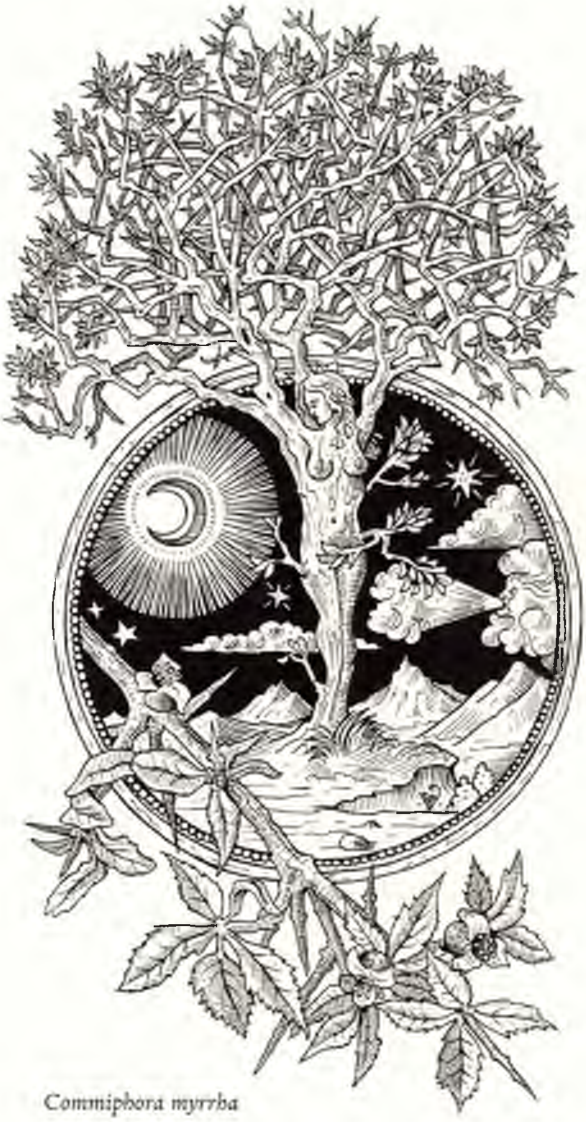
A SHRUBBY tree preferring the arid, rocky hills of Yemen and Somalia, growing to two meters or more in height, bristling with omnidirectional thorns. In its season, three-lobed leaves briefly appear, followed by pale flowers and berries, but most of the time the tree is leafless. Resinous exudate is collected by deliberate wounding of the stem, and used both for its medicinal and aromatic properties. Significant stands of Myrrh inhabit Ghizan on the Red Sea coast, a place of such forlorn climate it bears the local name *Tehama* meaning 'Hell'. The ancient Egyptian legend of the Phœnix reported that the bird appeared only at 500-year intervals, setting out from its homeland in Arabia, on a journey to the sanctuary of the sun in Egypt, "bringing its father sealed in an egg of Myrrh."

Its virtues as a medicament are anti-putrefactive, serving as a preserver of flesh. As a stimulating aromatic and tonic bitter, Myrrh is especially suited to derangements of the mucous membranes and excessive secretion, and in disorders of the digestive organs. Myrrh is employed as a friend to the teeth and gums in cases of their affliction, in the form of tincture, powder and topical oil.

> Myrrh, strengthening the body, does its strengthening through Saturn, strongest of all the planets.
>
> MARSILIO FICINO
> *Book of Life*, 1489

In both magic and medicine, Myrrh is aligned with the planetary virtues of Jupiter and Saturn. When expressed as an essential oil and used as a perfume, it also resonates with Venus. Its occult powers are Love, Attraction, Protection, Exorcism, Reconciliation, Bidding, Healing, Unbewitching, Consecration, and Protection from Noxious Spirits. In her celebrated book *Physica*, Hildegard of Bingen recommended Myrrh carried on the person against enchantments and evil spirits.

In the 3rd century *Leyden Papyrus* is found a magical operation entitled "The Method of Lucky Shadows that is tested": an ointment made from Hawk's egg pounded with Myrrh, probably employed to see the gods during invocation. The same text also gives a rather complex and time-consuming formula for a lust-inducing ointment using Bay, Balm of Gilead, and a fish mummified in natron and Myrrh.



Commiphora myrrha

The fragrant resin was employed when sacrificing bulls to the god Apis in ancient Egypt. After removing the head, intestines, legs, shoulders, and neck of the animal, the body cavity was then filled with honey, figs, consecrated bread, raisins, Frankincense and Myrrh. Then the entire corpse was then smothered in large amounts of oil and burned. Myrrh was also mentioned in a number of the ancient Ugaritic ritual texts, principally for its power of healing.

> *You are Myrrh, the bitter, the difficult, who reconciles combatants, who sears and who forces to love those who do not acknowledge Eros. Everyone calls you Myrrh, but I call you Flesh-eater and Inflamer of the Heart.*

So began one spell in *The Greek Magical Papyri,* calling the spirit of Myrrh to sway the affections of a woman to the anonymous sorcerer. The lengthy incantation bids the plant to "suck out her blood drop by drop", and other fearsome tortures until she requites his love.

The Spirit-Retinue of Myrrh

Preservation, Refuge, Abeyance, Solemnity, Recuperation, Stimulation, Kosmesis, Perfumed Flesh, Waxing Arousal, Royal Processions, Sovereign Protectors, Salutory Balsams, and Heroic Medicines.

Despite its geographic origin a world away in Arabia, the holy resin was present in England at an early date, by virtue of the Church and monastic communities. In the seventh century CE the Venerable Bede, noting its antiputrescent qualities, remarked that 'Myrrh and Aloe express continence of the Flesh, since the nature of these spices is that the bodies of the dead which are anointed with them decay least.'

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries Preparations of Mummy or *Mumia* were a popular medicament, appearing on the shelves of almost every apothecary in Europe, and often prescribed as a panacea. As its name implied, Mummy was the pulverized remants of ancient Egyptian corpses, having been plundered from royal tombs and common graves. The lion's share of genuine Egyptian Mummy was reserved for the wealthy; much of the corpses used to make 'inferior' grades were of European origin, fresh from the gallows, dried to a husk, and fortified with tree resins. A recipe for such 'instant Mummy' advises the maker to

> Select a cadaver of a red, uninjured, fresh, unspotted malefactor 24 years old, and killed by hanging, broken on the wheel, or impaled, upon which the moon and the sun have shone once: cut it in pieces, sprinkle with myrrh and aloes; then macerate for a few days, pour on spirits...

Some have dismissed the use of powdered Mummy for medicine as quackery, but one must bear in mind the large amount of oils, resins, and spices which preserved the corpse (of which Myrrh was a significant component), many of which had antiputrescent and antibacterial properties.

> ...worms die on smelling myrrh, vultures die on smelling amber, and serpents die on smelling cedar.
>
> PAOLO SEGNERI
> *Panegirico do Santo Anselmo*, 1829

In early modern folk magic, bags of Myrrh resin were sometimes hung in doorways to prevent the entrance of ill-doing sorcerers, noxious spirits, or unwanted visitors. Witchcraft traditions of the Commonwealth of Virginia utilize a malefic weapon known as a 'witchball' that incorporated Myrrh together with other, decidedly fouler, ingredients. Among these were the innards of a cat, a dead baby's toenails, and dog excrement. Myrrh was likely incorporated as a binding agent, and possibly for its associations with ancient sorcery and Christianity. The agglomeration of foul ingredients was bound with the charm:

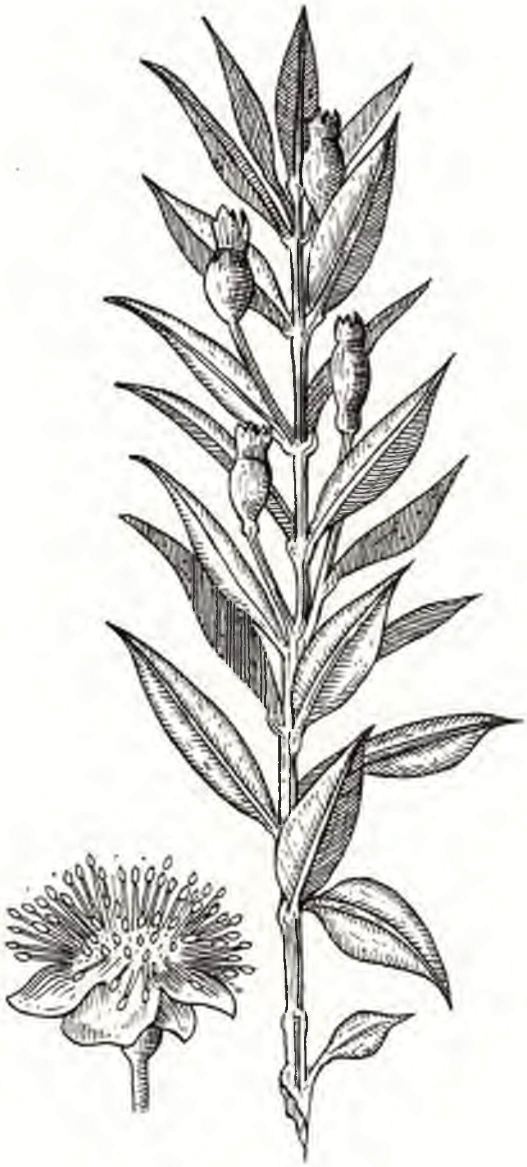
To this mystic myrrh,
To make a witchball,
I, the Devil, doth stir,
To place curses on one and all.

The fifteenth-century grimoire known as the *Munich Handbook* employs a demonic conjuring fumigant made from Myrrh and Saffron. When burnt, its peculiar odor allies with a variety of scents, including woody, balsamic, citrus, and floral. When using the resin in compound incense preparations, it possesses the peculiar property of resisting melting when directly heated, and is therefore difficult to amalgamate with other resins using the agency of heat and fire. In some formulae, the essential oil is therefore preferable.

MYRTLE

Myrtus communis
Myrtaceæ (Myrtle Family)

ANCIENT affinity with goddesses of love and attraction, nymphs, and the arcanum of erotic union defines the greater esoteric ambit of Myrtle. It flourishes as an arboreal oasis, thriving in heat and drought, and offers sweetness to those who sojourn in the company of its boughs. Its virtues are beauty, alluring fragrance, and adaptability: the tree was ascribed an astounding number of magical attributes in the ancient cultures of the Mediterranean and Middle East. The Myrtle is a Mandæan gnostic symbol of eternal life, and the Hill of Myrtles in Libya was associated with nymphs and the Cult of Kyrene. Venus, unto whom the tree is sacred, escaped into a Myrtle grove when pursued by Satyrs.



The Myrtle gives its name to the botanical family Myrtaceæ, encompassing kindred trees such as Eucalyptus and Tea Tree—all fragrant, stately, oil-rich, and giving forth a magnificent floral display. *Myrtus communis* may attain heights up to 5 meters, but many compact cultivars have been bred which attain a maximum height of less than one meter. The bark is reddish brown, the flowers are white or yellowish white, followed by a dark purple or black berry. The whole of the tree is fragrant: twigs, leaves, and flowers provide the essential oil, driven off into receivers by steam extraction. The quality of the oil of commerce varies considerably from maker to maker, owing its differences largely to the proportions of leaves to wood to flowers. While the best essential oil is of proven virtue in perfumes of arousal and unguents, its complexity is eclipsed by the fragrance given forth by the tree on a summer day. In such exhalations are to be discovered the green and shifting forms of the *nymphai*, botanical emissaries in the retinue of Venus.

The purple fruits, harvested in winter, are naturally sweet and aromatic, and several varieties of Myrtle are prized for eating. These may be harvested to make wine, or other liqueurs such as the traditional Sardinian Myrto, or dried like raisins for the addition to incense. Tincture of the leaf, initially olive green, stabilizes as a rich golden, the *Elixir Auraeus* which both refreshes and arouses the body. The distillate of its wine, through time, develops a complex, stimulating, and resinous spirit which stands well on its own or blends with diverse aromatics. In ancient Greece, Myrtle had a reputation as a funerary herb; sometimes the corpse was laid upon a bed of Myrtle branches; wreaths and stelæ decorations were also made. Ancient Hebrew sorcery employed a wand of Myrtle for raising the dead while keeping vigil upon the grave by night and burning spices and incense. Other variants of the practice offered oil and honey, and include severe questioning, but retained use of the Myrtle branch. Leafy sprigs are used as grave offerings for the dead in Morocco.

The tree has a long history of use for propitiating spirits in rites of sacrifice, without doubt related to its complex and pleasing aromatics. Myrtle was among the sweet-smelling woods burned on the altars of the ancient Hebrews, in addition to Cypress, Mastic, Juniper, Cedar, Pine, Small Pine, Bay, Camel's Thorn, and Tamarisk. In ancient Persia, tiaras of myrtle were worn during animal sacrifices. In the magical operations of *The Grimoire of Honorius the Great*, Myrtle was the designated wood to burn in the brazier as a sacrifice to spirits in Venusian rites. At marriages, sprigs of Myrtle are worn by brides to ensure a fruitful marriage. The fresh branches can be used to perfume the bed, and the leaves and flowers yield a remarkably fragrant steam-distilled hyrdrosol. A custom from Lebanon uses a Myrtle-infused oil to anoint newborns.

In ancient Greece, a wine was made solely from the fruits, and philters of love-magic employed a strong tea of Myrtle leaves. The traditional Sardinian liqueur *Myrto* is still made in two traditional formulations—a green summer expression using leaves, and a crimson-purple winter expression from the fruits. Each glorifies distinct sensualities of the tree, and is well worth making; the botanical intoxicants can be distinctly perceived as distinct from the ethanol, and they align precisely with the ancient spiritual attributions. In contracts to its properties of rousing the flesh and multiplying semen, the tree also has a reputation as a savior against venom: in the *Book of Poisons* of Ibn Whashiya, Myrtle seed was eaten as an antidote to Squill poisoning, and the seed and leaves were burned as incense for this same purpose.

CORRESPONDENCES

Essence: Arousal.

Magical Powers: Attraction, Propitiation, Necromancy.

Planet: Venus.

Deific Forms: Asherah, Qetesh, Anat, Aphrodite, Venus.

Patron Spirits: Nymphs.

Appellations: Asu, Hadas.

Chemical Virtues: myrtenol, camphene, geraniol, and pinene, all aromatic.

Emblem: A bride in purple weds a bridegroom in green. Together they grasp a golden chalice.

NARCISSUS

Narcissus spp.

Narcissaceæ (Narcissus Family)

THE Greeks of antiquity attributed a most baneful influence to the blossom, and to which they also ascribed dullness of the intellect, insanity and death. This is in keeping with the flower's mythic origins, which were surrounded by madness, vanity and annihilation of the flesh. The herb is named for Narkissos, the comely youth bewitched by his reflection in a pond. After he drowned therein, a white Narcissus bloomed at the place where his corpse washed ashore. In other Graeco-Roman myth-streams, the same plant was employed by Pluto to lure Proserpine unto his infernal kingdom. Other myths relay that crowns of Narcissus were carried by the dead when they went forth into the presence of the underworld gods. An ancient Greek tradition, persisting into present tines, was strewing graves with the flower. As a funerary flower, *Narcissus tazetta* is frequently planted in modern Muslim cemeteries.

NETTLE, STINGING

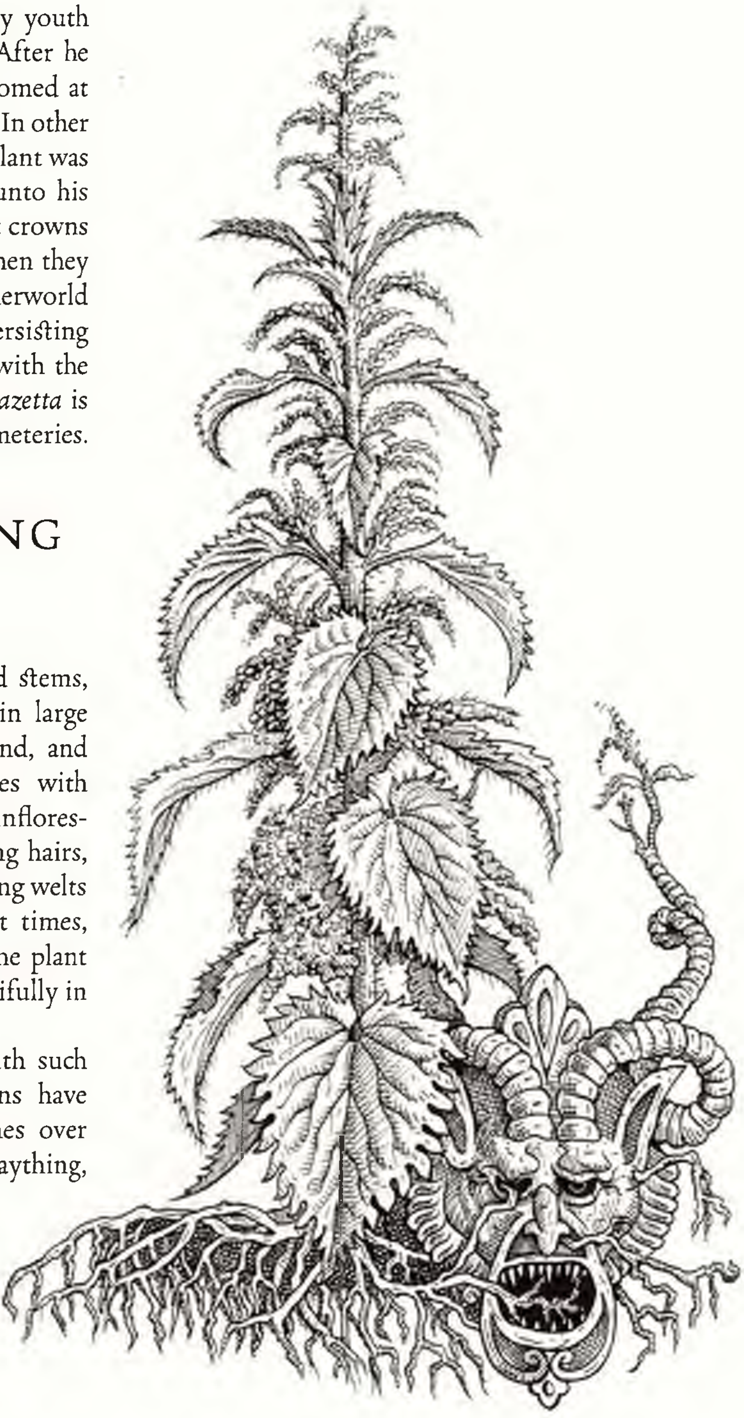
Urtica dioica

Urticaceæ (Nettle Family)

A TALL herb with stinging leaves and stems, growing to 2 meters, usually growing in large beds, populating roadsides, waste ground, and riparian corridors. It has simple leaves with strongly serrated edges, and a catkin-like inflorescence. The plant is known for its stinging hairs, or trichomes, which raise burning, irritating welts on exposed skin. Until relatively recent times, both the Scots and the Dutch utilized the plant for fiber to produce cloth. It grows plentifully in almost all parts of the United States.

As would be expected of a plant with such an aggressive magical character, humans have christened it with a host of rude names over time, including Devil's Beard, Devil's Plaything, and Burn Hazel. The Anglo-Saxons knew it as Stiðe, meaning rough or stiff, and it held an honored place in the 'Nine Herbs Charm' of the sacred tenth century leechbook *Lacugna*.

In folk curing it is antiseptic, depurative, nutritive, diuretic, and theriac. The leaves and tops, when steamed, are an excellent pot herb and, as they are iron-rich, have been used to treat anaemia. A decoction from the root has been used to dissolve kidney stones. The herb also stimulates the gastrointestinal tract, pancreas, and gall. In ancient times, the seed was an antidote for hemlock and mercury poisoning; in modern folk medicine, a decoction of seeds has been used as an antidote for mushroom poisoning. A decoction is useful in hemmorages of the lungs, stomach, and



urinary organs. It is also employed successfully in diarrhea and dysentery. The tea may be drunk at pleasure, and a strong tincture of the fresh plants serves as an excellent tonic. Nettle beer is traditionally brewed in some parts of England.

Among its chief occult properties are strength as driven by adversity. This virtue informs Nettle's occult powers of Healing, Binding, Exorcism, Protection from Poison, Invigoration and Warfare. Though its sting is initially painful, it serves as secondary function of stimulation, and in sufficient dosage may provoke ecstatic states. The practice of magical or medical flogging with Stinging Nettle was referred to as *urtication* and was practiced by diverse ascetics including Christian monks. This art was also used on animals: to protect their livestock from witches, Hungarian farmers ritually scourged their cattle with stalks of the herb.

> *One could tell whether a sick man would live or die by imersing a nettle in his water for twenty-four hours. If the plant dried up as a result, he would die; if it remained fresh and green he would live.*
>
> G. SIMOTTA
> *A Theatre of Plantatary Houres*, 1631

An old spell for magically curing disease employed the Nettle in a kind of ritual scapegoat, or sin-eating capacity: a friend or relative of the sufferer grasped the plant with bare hands and uprooted it while chanting the name of the one afflicted by the disease, and his or her parents.

The old lore of the Isle of Skye accounts May 3rd as the date that the Devil and his loyal angels were cast of heaven; Nettles sprung up where they landed. Romany traditions assert that the Nettle grows in places where there are subterranean passages to the *pcuvus*, or Earth-fairies; because of this it is considered sacred to them and is sometimes called Pcuvus-Wood. In their funerary rites, Caucasian Estonians placed Nettles under the corpse's clothes and on the face.

Nettle, along with Thorn Apple, Tobacco, and red ants, was one of a tetrad of supremely powerful drugs among the Kawaiisu Indians of California. As part of their training to become a *pohagadi* (bewitching shaman), children walked through hedges of stinging nettles. In another magical ordeal, Nettles were pressed against the chest to induce dreams. Additionally, there is some indication of Kawaiisu usage of Nettle as a post-sweathouse ritual urtication. Here the species in question is *Urtica holosericea*. All four of these medicines, were employed for dream and vision induction, as well as alleviation of pain or swelling.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF NETTLE

Excruciation, Aggravation, Inflammation, Resistance,
Prickling, Fulmination, Scalding, Forbearance,
Flagellation, Blistering Ecstasies, Reddening
Weals, Setaceous Mortifications,
and Burning Thickets.

⁂

In Ukranian folk magic it was used as protection against witchcraft. Held in the hand with Yarrow, it was a preventative amulet against hauntings and infectious spirits. In England, it was used as a magical talisman against fear. Nettles placed in the window comprised an old Russian folk charm against witches on St. John's Eve. Its aggressively protective nature was also highly regarded in Slavic folk magic; in Poland, Nettles were affixed to the exterior of the house as talismans against witches on Midsummer night.

For magic, medicine, and as a foodstuff, the leaves and tops should be picked in late spring prior to flowering, making certain the plants inhabit an unpolluted soil. For use of the root, the creeping rhizome should be gathered in Autumn. Leaves may be tinctured at any desired strength, or dried whole in a warm dark place with vigourous air circulation. Some folkore recommends gathering the herb at midnight, this time being the most respectful to its presiding spirit. Dyes from the boiled leaves and stems yield yellow, or a gray olive color, the first mordanted with alum and the second with ferrous sulfate.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Protection, Fortification, Potentiation, Warfare, Coercion.
Planets: Mars and Jupiter.
Element: Fire.
Deific Forms: Mars, Ares.
Virtue: Courage.
Body Part: Blood.
Therapeutic: Arousal.
Affliction: Lethargy.
Emblem: A green flagrum, igniting a red fire.

NIGHTSHADE, BLACK

Solanum nigrum

Solanaceæ (Nightshade Family)

THE European Black Nightshade is an annual herb with a bushy habit, growing to just over one meter, its appearance occupying the liminal zone between preened cultivar and rank weed. The leaves are oval and irregularly toothed, and the flowers have white petals with yellow anthers. Green berries are about 5 mm in diameter, and quickly ripen to black (or, in some varieties, orange). Though native to Europe, it is naturalized in North America where it is an easily recognized volunteer in farm and garden.

The plant is mildly toxic, owing to the presence of the glycoalkaloid solanine and other tropanes. It is often reported as having been responsible for fatalities in children, but deaths are rare. The toxic principles are concentrated in the unripe berry, and also the root. Aerial portions of the herb are sedative, and a weak nerve poison, and have been compounded into ointments for topical pain relief. In pre-colonial North America, Rappahannock medicine men of North Carolina employed Black Nightshade both as a poison and as a sedative, the latter made from a weak infusion of the leaves. As with many of the Nightshades, its planetary ruler is Saturn, but it equally expresses a Lunar quality.

Edible cultivars of the plant exist and are valued for both berries and greens. The ripe black berry of the related American Black Nightshade (*Solanum americanum*) is a time-honored forage fruit, but few Americans eat it anymore, owing to generational lapses in gardening knowledge, and its resemblance to other more toxic Solanaceae such as Belladonna. The related *Solanum × burbankii*, known as the Wonderberry, was a popular old-time garden variety bred for its esculent fruit. It earns its keep both as a culinary dainty and as a naughty-looking specimen to deter curious neighbors.

In ancient Babylonia, Black Nightshade was added to beer as an antidote for scorpion's sting, and Pliny reports that in ancient Greece, the Thessalian witches employed Black Nightshade in a philter to evoke "obscene desires, forms, and images." In Africa, the Black Nightshade has been used by sorcerers to summon rain; it was also ingested for the purpose of divining the fate of lost or stolen objects. I have used the fruits to render a dark purple tint useful in ceremonial paintings and inks and dried as 'raisins' for use as vegetal bulking components of incenses. In this latter usage, care must be taken to completely dessicate the fruit before adding to the incense, to prevent mold.

NUTMEG

Myristica fragrans

Myristicaceæ (Nutmeg Family)

NUTMEG is a dioecious fragrant tree of the coastal, humid tropics, growing to heights in excess of 10 meters, having smooth bark, thick leaves, and small yellow flowers. The seed, either whole or ground into powder, and the essential oil expressed therefrom. The spice Mace, which originates from the same tree, is the ground crimson aril enclosing the seed. As an 'exotic' imported spice, Nutmeg was known to ancient Rome and medieval Europe.

Nutmeg is a carminative—though an imperfect one—and is also regarded as an aphrodisiac in some folk medical traditions, particularly Arabian and Chinese. Some recent animal studies (Singh et al., 2013) indicate Nutmeg's potential as a drug to treat erectile dysfunction and to improve penile reflexes. Nutmeg flowers also have some ethnobotanical tradition as an aphrodisiac.

It possesses a potent and complex phytochemistry which includes such compounds as myristicin, saffrole, elemicin, borneol, pinene, camphene, among numerous other aromatics. Taken internally in excessive doses, Nutmeg causes stupor, tachycardia, and nausea, primarily due to myristicin, of which the seed is comprised 4–8 %. Myristicin can be a visionary and euphoria-producing principle, though the physiological route to its efficacy is arduous: after being chemically altered through amination in the liver, it engenders the amphetamine derivative MDA. Similarly, when safrole is aminated, MDMA results.

Psychoactive experimentation with freshly ground Nutmeg among my circle of associates over the years has confirmed the potentials suggested by the chemistry, though effects are of an unrefined, variable, and duplicitous nature. Though euphoric sensations were present, they were accompanied by interminable nausea, dizziness, and languor. One person noted the disquieting loss of sensation, and ability to move, in the legs for many hours, an effect described some "spice heads" as a pinch of Heaven in a pint-glass of Hell. This dreadful axis stands in direct contrast to Nutmeg's use as a spice, where the smallest amount of the grated nut can eleveate a culinary dish or drink far beyond the sum of its sensorial parts and render it ambrosial.

> TO STAY LOOSENESS. Take a very good nutmeg, prick it full of holes, toast and grate it, then boil it well in milk, and eat it in the morning: the nutmeg toasted and grated in a glass of red porter, will do as well, and seldom misses of a cure.
>
> *The Old Farmers Almanack, 1793*

Nutmeg is aligned with the Moon, its spectrum of powers aligning to the concept of betwitchment, which that planetary body governs. In occult operations, its magical properties are Beneficence, Allure, Fertility, Success in Gambling, Protection Against Disease, Protection from Maleficia, Enhancement of Memory, and Wealth.

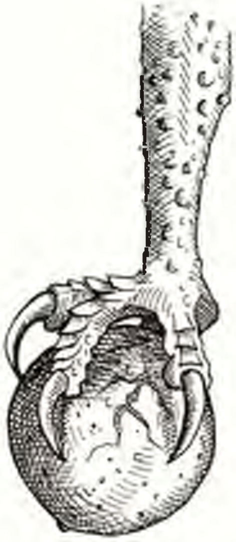
THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF NUTMEG

Fervency, Warmth, Enhancement, Cumulation, Conjugation, Impoundment, Tittivation, Crusade, Dysequilibrium, Confounded Delirium, Preternatural Arousal, Smoldering Eroticism, and Sovereign Remedy.

Carried on the person, it was used as a charm to bring luck, but equally often its talismanic use was used as protection against disease including fever, broken bones and rheumatism. In Malaysian sorcery, persons infected by noxious spirits were fed Nutmegs to expel the offending entities. In Peruvian magical curing, ground Nutmeg is boiled in a potion with six other plants and drunk once monthly as a cure for 'Bad Air', a category of illnesses with magical causes attributed to malevolent spellcasting.

In Afro-Caribbean magic, an esteemed talisman for gambling was made from a whole Nutmeg nut, with a hole drilled therein and filled with mercury. The hole is sealed with wax and the fetish is carried in a red bag, rubbed with a silver coin to activate its power. This form of magical amulet is allied with a category of magico-alchemical charms known as *Xenechta.*

In the 16th century, Nutmeg seeds were regarded as a panacea as well as a spice. Individual seeds encased in silver were worn as sleep-inducing charms. The first appearance of Nutmeg as an intoxicant in Western literature is noted in 1576 by Lobelius in *Plantarum seu stiripium historia*, relaying that a woman, probably attempting to use the seeds as an abortifacient, became 'deliriously inebriated.'



NUX VOMICA

Strychnos nux-vomica

Loganiaceæ (Logania Family)

SEMEN Strychnos, as this tree is also known, is a native to India and Southeast Asia, growing to 15 meters in height. Its leaves are ellipitic or ovate, 8–15 cm long; the inflorescences are white, resembling umbels. The tree produces large orange fruits containing flat, round seeds. The genus *Strychnos* contains about 150 different species of trees, many of which contain important toxins.

Its medicinal powers are stimulating (in low doses), tonic, and laxative. In India and Eastern Asia, the seeds have been used for centuries as a prophylactic against cholera and snakebites. In homeopathic medicine, Nux Vomica is used to relieve nausea.

The hirsute seeds contain strychnine ($C_{21}H_{22}N_2O_2$) and brucine ($C_{23}H_{26}N_2O_4$). In tiny quantities, strychnine stimulates the nervous system. Death by strychnine is a painful affair, the body stiffening and riddled with cramps, the mind ablaze with fear and paranoia.

In magical operations its principal powers are Binding, Attraction, Potentiation, and Coercion. In India, the tree is regarded as a sovereign constrainer of devils; malevolent spirits are often exorcised and constrained within it by way of hammering a nail into its trunk. In eastern India, the plant drives away malevolent spirits. Tribal use of the tree employed the seed as a talisman for protection young children from maleficia.

As a talisman, seeds may be added to charm-bags for magical spells of trickery and deception, for speedy travel, and success in court cases. Their power, when added to other herbs, tends to bolster or potentiate the powers of others present.

OAK

Quercus spp.
Fagaceæ (Beech Family)

THERE are almost 600 different species of Oak, ranging from small shrubs of one meter in height to stately trees over 35 meters. The tree is known as a rich source of tannins, and possesses astringent, antiseptic, febrifuge, and stypic medicinal properties. Young bark, acorns, and leaves are used to stop bleeding; it may also be employed externally for dandruff and as an invigorant for the scalp. Folk doctors also have used it successfully for hemmorhoids and as a douche for vaginitis. The Kermes scale insect, held in high esteem for its brilliant scarlet pigment, makes its home on the evergreen Kermes Oak (*Q. coccifera*); the ancients also valued the creature as an ingredient in aphrodisiac elixirs. It is a tree deeply associated with sacrality, and is anciently aligned with manifold divinities including Janus, the Dagda, Jupiter, Thor, Herne, Rhea, Cerridwen, Erato, Brigid, Hekate, Pan, Thunor, Cybele, and Blouduwedd. *Dryades*, the wood-dwelling spirits of Greek tradition, took their names from *drys*, meaning 'oak'.

In ancient Greece, Zeus was worshipped in the form of a giant Oak at the the oracular shrine of Dodona in Epirus. This Tree-shrine was perhaps the oldest of the Greek sanctuaries; in its day, the grove was known to be very old, having certain individuals well over a thousand years old. The tree of the god stood in a grove of Oaks; it had oracular powers and was consulted. The responses of Zeus were interpreted from the rustling of the mighty Oak's branches, the murmur of the scared spring which rose at is foot, or from drawing oracle lots reserved in an urn beneath it. Another means of oracular information at this mighty Oak was delivered through 'prophetesses in ecstasy'. Even the the dead wood of this tree carried divinitory powers: a beam hewn from the Dodona oak was built into Jason's *Argo*, and served well as an oracle for the Argonauts.

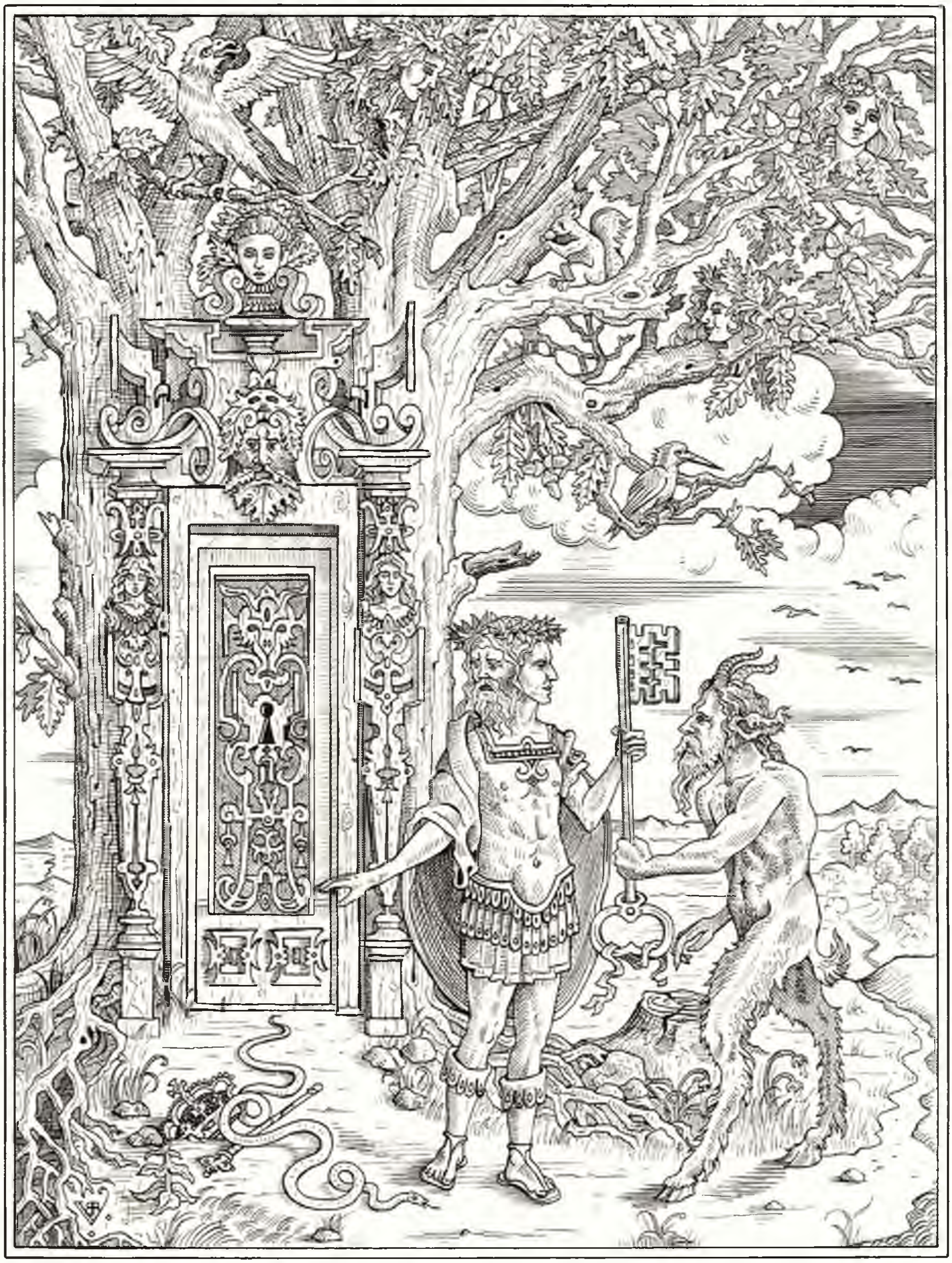
THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF THE OAK

Primacy, Lordship, Coronation, Passage, Nutriment, Compunction, Enrichment, Hardness, Rigidity, Priapism, Kingly Jurisdiction, Seminal Prowess, and Solitary Genius.

* * *
* *
*

The Tree's occult powers are Binding, Fertility, Wealth, Triumph, Earthing, Immortality, Potentiation, Protection from Lightning, Ward Against Noxious Spirits, and Protection from Maleficia. It has also enjoyed repute as a ceremonial emetic, as among the Navajo Ramah. The Doctrine of Signatures assigns the Oak to both Jupiter and Mars. In general, it is a tree of strength, virility, and good fortune. Romans made coronets of its leaves as a symbol for the bravery of their heroes. In some parts of Europe thrived the custom of the Marriage-Oak, whereby newly married couples would dance around an Oak for fertility and a blessing upon the union. The ancient Need-Fires of the British Isles were kindled with Oak.

Although most herbalists in the Western Esoteric Tradition are familiar with the Oak lore of Europe, the Americas have a much richer concentration of species diversity, as does China. The United States and Mexico alone contain almost two hundred endemic species, and China has about 100. Among the Navajo, the Gray Oak (*Q. grisea*) was used to protect hogans from lightning, ghosts and witches, and the leaves of the White Oak (*Q. gambelii*) were used as a ceremonial emetic. The decoction of White Oak (*Q. alba*) was used by the Iroquois as a witchcraft medicine to compel straying wives to return.

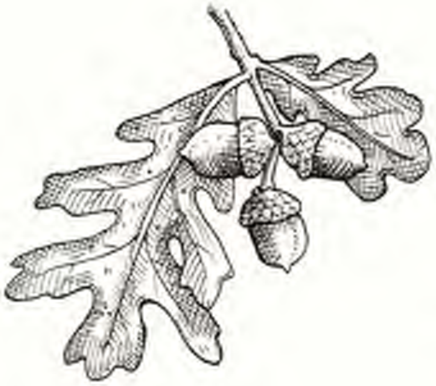


ENTREATY OF THE OAK WARDEN

In Britain, according to the writings of the Venerable Bede, the pagan King Ethelbert demanded St. Auguſtine preach to him under an Oak rather than indoors; thereby the King would be safe from any noxious spell the Chriſtians might try to caſt on him. In some areas of Europe, where sacred Oaks or groves were not deſtroyed entirely, certain trees were 'chriſtianized', much in the same manner that holy wells and other pagan temples and shrines were.

> Take a new nail, and make the gum bleed with it, and then drive it into an oak. This did cure William Neal, a very stout gentleman, when he was almost mad with the pain, and had a mind to have pistolled himself.
>
> JOHN AUBREY
> *Miscellanies*, 1721

The branches of the tree, exhibiting excellent grain, hardness, and desnity, is favored for magical rods. Oak wands were used by the priests of Lykian Zeus to sacrifice in Hagno's water-spring on mount Lykaion. A wand of Holm or Holly Oak (Q. *ilex*) is used in a flying spell in the *Clavicle of Solomon*. The dew upon Oak-leaves, collected on the morning of May 1 for use as a face wash, has the power to grant a wish when so used.



Acorn-magic, associated with the fruit of the tree, is a diverse tradition with a great many spells and charms. Carried on the person, acorns are potent sexual talismans and agents of Attraction. The Moroccan aphrodisiac electuary known as *madschun* is made from honey, acorns, sweet almonds, butter, flour, sesame, hashish, and cantharides beetle—the grossly caustic insect also known as 'Spanish Fly'. Talismans made from Oak or in the shape of acorns are traditionally used in windows for protection from lightning, and to appease storm gods.

An old augury employed two acorns dropped in a bowl of water to determine the course of an amorous liaison. If the two acorns clung together, the portents for a harmonious union were good; if they floated apart, the liaison was doomed.

Arnoldo de Villanova, writing in the early 14th century, describes a curse against a newly married bride and groom. An acorn is split in half, and each of the halves is placed beside a walkway where the couple is to walk. Similarly, among a number of Russian curses for disrupting weddings was the casting of an Oak leaf upon the bride to cause sterility.

Oak Tincture

A spring tonic drawing forth the powers of the tree. Leaves and twigs are gathered late in the spring. Because of the season in which the plant material is harvested, the tannic influence is muted, bringing the green and herbaceous notes to the fore.

Oak leaf	15 g
Oak stem, woody	5 g
rectified spirit 60% ABV	150 ml

❡ Inter plant material in a clean vessel with the spirit for two months, shaking occasionally. Strain and bottle. 1–2 dropperfuls are taken alone, or in spring water.

The Cult of the Cask

ROTTING grain and fruit pulp have long been used as an intoxicant by man and beast alike. This sour fermentation, caused by abundant natural yeasts, was likely the inspiration for the first zymurgists. Over time, selected fruits, especially the grape, were bred specifically for their alcohol-producing potentials, engendering the prized cultivars now known as varietals. The life and vigor of such fruits, their unique relationship to the land they grow on, and the nature of the growing season, produced the characteristics prized in a particular vintage. As beer, wine, pulque, and other low-alcohol drinks were perfected through the arts of fermentation, they also amassed spiritual attributes for the powers of intoxication and license, sometimes hypostasizing in a spirit, goddess, or god, such as the Roman Bacchus. The divine nature of alcohol was also recognized by some alchemists who referred to it as an angel; others knew it as the risen spirit of the fallen grain harvest, John Barleycorn, whose salvific blood liberated and inspired.

When contemplating the power of alcohol—spiritual or mundane—it is also essential to understand its demonic pedigree, as a significant part of its origin lies in putrefaction and death. Sugars are consumed *en masse* by yeast, excreting deadly carbon dioxide and ethyl alcohol, a carcinogen. The greater the sugar consumed, the higher the alcohol content, up to about fifteen percent by volume, which provokes a mass die-off of yeast. To attain higher percentages of alcohol, the alchemical process of *distallatio* must be undertaken, itself an endeavor characterized by burning, death, and concentration of poisons.

Yet, amidst this moribund process of death and putrefaction a transformation occurs, from must to wine, and wort to beer, a literal 'transfiguration of the vineyard', and one reason wine plays such an important role in religions featuring the mystery of resurrection. Divine intoxication arising from alcohol, in its ideal mystical extrapolations, thus embodies the initiatory elements of life, death, and metempsychosis. Magically, fermentation is thus the Work of the Corpse: should any doubt this, the infernal and bacteria-rich 'muck hole,' or dunder-pit, so prized in the making of certain Jamaican rums, provides a rich and fœtid testimony.

We must also remember that many religions place alcohol under a curse, or otherwise forbid it. In excess, its angelic nature is subdued by the Devil, invoking the boorish and bestial self, hearkening once again to its putrefactive origins. Especially foul is the derangement of human motor control, and the so-called 'blackout' phase, where both judgment and memory of actions are stripped from the drinker. The diabolical nature of alcohol is also manifest on the palate, in the fiery heat of the ethanol, a characteristic of new wines and fresh distillate.

Despite this, religious taboo is often insufficient to prevent communion with the Spirit: when Sir Richard Burton came to Utah to study the notoriously teetotalling Mormons, he mentioned the so-called *Valley Tan* in his writings—a native Mormon whiskey made primarily from a mashbill of Oats. Mark Twain sojourned there as well, and also noted it. In the present day, High West, the premier Utah-based distillery specializing in whiskey and rye, has in fact produced their own Valley Tan, aimed at restoring this lost piece of American religious history.

The diabolical nature of fermented grains and fruits can, to a certain degree, be tempered by the noble Oak. The process of storing and aging such draughts has long been as important as that of their harvest, pressing and fermentation. The resting of the liquid, through the vectors of time, season, temperature and the substance of the container itself, lends unique tempering qualities to the vintage. The archaic wines and beers of ancient days were stored in ceramic vessels, whose structures preserved a portion of the prized yeast strain, once emptied. Later, Europeans began to age wine in oak barrels, which imparted its own particular characteristics to the vintage such as tannins, a signature category of compounds in oak and other woods. Distillation of primary fermentations, which became widespread in the early modern era, gave rise to brandies, whiskies, rums and other strong liquors, some of which were casked and aged in barrels, mellowing their fiery and 'diabolic' attributes. As much as a mark of the character of the grain and the distiller, the mystique of these spirits arose from the particular experience of casking, that is, aging the maturing distillate in oak barrels.

CASKED ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Armagnac
Brandy
Cognac
Port
Rye Whiskey
Tequila Anejo
Sherry
Bourbon Whiskey
Calvados
Irish Whiskey
Rhum
Scotch Whiskey
Tequila Reposado
Wine

The power of the Oak to transform the aromatic character of alcohol is humbling and complex. There are more than 2,000 chemical compounds in whiskey, many of them contributing to flavor complexity and originating in—or transformed by—the cask. In the purview of whiskey, the 'white dog' emerging from the still is of both fiery and loutish temperament, its assertive ethanolic flare eclipsing the glories of the corn, rye and barley: this is the raw, unaged spirit known as 'moonshine'. Yet, with just four years rested in the barrel, or better yet ten or more, the dog is tamed by wood and become a marvel. The best examples of the casking art can be downright contemplative, and are well represented among Scotch whiskies, such as Glengoyne 25-year single malt matured in ex-Oloroso Sherry casks.

Oak Species for Casking

TREE	BOTANICAL	NATIVE RANGE
American White Oak	*Quercus alba*	North America
English Oak	*Quercus robur*	Britain and Europe
Sessile Oak	*Quercus petraea*	Britain, Europe, Iran
Mongolian Oak	*Quercus mongolica*	East Asia, Japan
Pyrenean Oak	*Quercus pyrenaica*	SW Europe, NW Africa
Red Oak	*Quercus rubra*	Eastern North America
Dalechamps Oak	*Quercus dalechampii*	Southeastern Europe

Cooperage Types, by Size and Volume

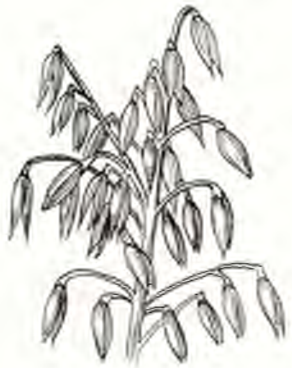
CASK NAME	VOLUME
Tun	252 gallons
Butt	126 gallons
Puncheon	84 gallons
Hogshead	63 gallons
Tierce	42 gallons
Barrel	31.5 gallons
Rundlet	18 gallons

Cask aging of wines and spirits relies not only on the characteristics of the wood, but also on such factors as humidity and temperature fluctuation. Like tides in a tiny ocean, liquids advance and retreat within the barrel as it expands and contracts, penetrating into the wood. Tannins in the wood are a natural antiseptic, as well as lending complex flavors to the spirit. With the production of bourbon whiskey, intentional charring of the barrel interior is standard, as the charcoal lends additional mellowing qualities.

Preferred cooperage for most distilled spirits is derived from *Querus* species in the subgenus *Quercus*, also known as *Leucobalanus*, the so-called White Oaks. Of these, American White Oak (*Q. alba*) is preferred for casks for its influence on the flavor of the aging spirit. Oak from the forests of Limousin, France—more specifically Tronçais—is highly esteemed and sought after by traditional coopers, for casking Bordeaux and cognac, due to its mild tannin.

Bourbon whiskey is a quintessentially American, syncretic spirit, and a grand testament to the cultural diversity of the United States. If we were to trace its bloodline, it is essentially an Irish-style whiskey, primarily using a Native American grain, and employing a French cognac-style aging process with a charred oak barrel of a native American Oak. The factors which led to its development were as much a result of locality and economic necessity as distillation traditions, yet over the years it has become a paragon of Aqua Vitæ, a veritable apotheosis of the composite intelligences of grain and oak. Further refinements with cherished yeast strains and cask environments have led to greater perfection of the Art.

Among the more devout of whiskey drinkers I know, particularly those of southern extraction, there exists the cult of *Bourbon Jesus*, a syncretism of the Gods of the Cask, Old John Barleycorn and Christ Triumphant. His face emerges from the land as a wise embodiment of grainfield and farmer, but also of the sublime arts of distiller, fermenter and cooper. Instead of the scandalous thorny crown of religion, his head bears a golden circlet of Kentucky Corn, and his beard is a thick mass of ripened ears of Wheat, Barley and Rye. Embodied in the finest whiskies, he is beseeched for intercession when that a bottle eludes the seeker and toasted when it is found.



OATS

Avena sativa

Poaceæ (Grass Family)

A FAST-GROWING cereal grass native to temperate regions, growing to 1.5 meters. Though domesticated, it is often found wild, or as a 'useful weed' in the garden. In folk medicine, it is valued for its soothing, comforting, and nourishing energetics, and used as a nerve tonic. Tea or tincture made from the milky seed may be taken to counter sleeplessness. Oatmeal is used for stomach ulcers, as well as constipation and chronic diarrhea. Poultices soothe inflamed or allergic skin reactions.

It is aligned with both Venus and Mercury, and the element of Water. In the former role, it is sometimes considered aphrodisiac, a virtue arising from its sweet, milky exudate; in the latter, its nervine attributions align with the celestial governor of mentation.

Generally, its magical essence is stabilizing, or neutralizing of disruptive influcences. In New England, Hoodoo practitioners of Maryland strewed Oats about the bed to prevent witches from 'riding' a sleeper's soul at night.

An old charm against warts employed two separate stalks of Oats: the first was kept in a safe place, preferably retained on the person, and the other was thrown over the shoulder. When the second stalk was tossed, one spoke a self-blessing: the warts would disappear soon after.

OLEANDER

Nerium oleander

Apocyanaceæ (Dogbane Family)

A SHRUB native to the Mediterranean, particularly North Africa, and occurring throughout Asia to Japan. It is drought-resistant, tolerating poor soils, but preferring chalky substrates. Growing to 6 meters in height, the shrub has red, pink, coral or white flowers. Its lanceolate leaves are distinctive, somewhat resembling those of Laurel and Rhododendeon, hence its old name *Rhododaphne*. It is a favored landscape plant due to its showy floral display, low maintenence, effective screening and resistance to exposure to the elements. Although up to five species are attributed the genus *Nerium*, only *N. oleander* has broad scientific acceptance, though several proposed species need further assessment.

In planetary correspondence it is linked with the emanations of Saturn, in part due to its plant poisons; as such it has a traditional role as funeral herb in Greece and Italy. The poisonous principles of the plant include the toxic cardiac glycosides oleandrin, oleandrin monogulcoside, and desacytoleandrin. Toxicological studies relate that one leaf is sufficient to kill a person and that merely stirring a drink with one of the herb's twigs can precipitate lethal poisoning. Symptoms of poisoning from ingestion include cramping, dilated pupils, vomiting, arrhythmia, and death by cardiac arrest. Having once borne witness to the accidental ingestion of a single leaf by an eight-year-old child, no adverse effects were noted save the ensuing panic of the adults. Subsequent discussions with the poison control center yielded considerably more information, suggesting Oleander poisoning can very widely based on such factors as cultivar, leaf size, and body constitution.

Personal experiences as an estate gardener suggest that in sufficient quantity the sap is topically active. After spending a day hand-trimming a lengthy hedge of Oleander, I experienced mild poisoning after being thoroughly coated with the sap and sticky exudate. Symptoms included mild delirium, sweating, irregular pulse and headache—as well as a profound contact with the intelligence of the plant. The plant does in fact have some use as a topical folk medicine in the Mediterranean, where the dried, powdered leaves, compounded in oil, are used to relieve rheumatism.

In North Africa, branches of the shrub are used by the Bni Aros to treat patients with fever, who inhale the smoke from the burning branches. Scorched branches of Oleander were used as ceremonial sticks, carved with designs after burning, used in similar fashion to a mumming stick for purificatory ceremonial processions.

As used in sorcery, it is most often valued as a protector, being ascribed properties especially loathesome to malefic spirits. In Morocco, Oleander twigs were hung in Fig trees or in gardens to avert infestation by pests or evil influences. Similarly, the plant material was also hung in rafters of the house as charms to prevent influence of the Evil Eye. Leaves were inscribed as charms with verses from the Quran, much in the manner of ancient Laurel-leaf sorcery. Plant material gathered just prior to Midsummer was esteemed as especially powerful.

In India, sweet-scented varities of the plant are sacred to Lord Shiva, and flower-garlands are used in numerous pujas. The Oleander is also the floral emblem of St. Joseph, and in Cyprus the flowers are traditionally used to adorn churches on feast days.

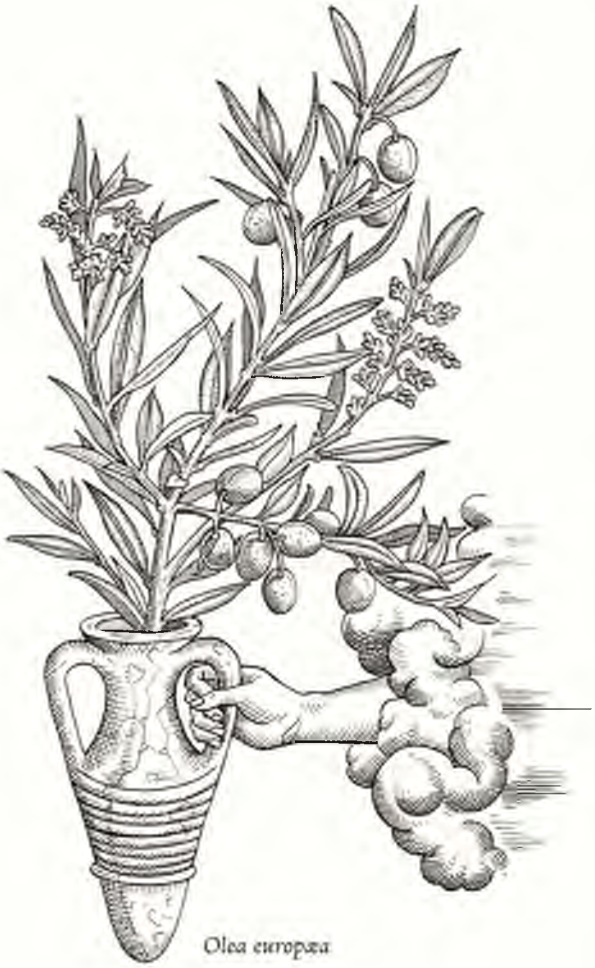
OLIVE

Olea europæa

Oleaceæ (Olive Family)

A LIFE-GIVING tree integral to human culture and religion, Olives are evergreens native to the Mediterranean and have been in cultivation for over 6,000 years. The earliest groves were in Egypt and the southern part of Crete. The tree varies in height between 5 and 15 meters, and can withstand extremes in climate, topography and moisture, thriving on bare rocks. Being dioecious, single trees are either male or female. Male olive trees are notoriously virile, their pollen so copious and allergenic that some cities have banned their planting in gardens and landscaping. The genus *Olea* contains 35 accepted species, scattered through tropical warm temperate regions of the world.

The flesh of the edible fruits contains 50% oil, which is prized not only as a food but also as an ancient magical and religious sacrament. Oil of unripe fruits was known to the ancients as *omphacium*, a term also applied to oil extracted from grapeseed. Olive oil alone is of superior quality as a topical, and it forms the basis of many Middle Eastern and North African medicines. This is achieved by the simple action of pounding roots, seeds, flowers, and resins in the highly absorptive oil, and using it as ointment.


Olea europæa

Christians in Mediterranean lands have traditionally employed the hard Olive pits for rosary-beads. The wood, known for its hardness and fine grain, is a favored wood for fashioning effigies and talismans, and Olive charcoal was used for smoldering incenses in ancient Mediterranean magic. Hot fomentations of the leaves have been used as a cure for the bites of Pyrenean vipers.

Among the characteristics of the celestial bodies, the Olive absorbs and manifests the Solar affinity best, in medicine, nutriment and its material embodiment. When it forms part of a magical operation, its power is divided between the Sun and Saturn. The occult powers of Olive, as attested from widespread use over millennia, are Exorcism, Summoning, Love, and Purification; it is also firmly rooted in funerary ritual and associations, from ancient times to modern. The Olive is considered Holy in the sight of God among Jews, Christians, and Muslims; the Prophet himself proclaimed "*Eat olive oil and massage it over your bodies since it is a holy (Mubarak) tree.*"

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF OLIVE

Treasure, Sustenance, Convocation, Demarcation,
Reconciliation, Adaptability, Eupepsia,
Birthright, Assuredness, Oleaginous
Glory, Erogenous Supplication,
Green Sanctoria, and
Eternal Provision.

Its boughs possess godly power. Olive branches are sometimes hung in doorways to prevent the entrance of noxious persons or spirits. One ancient Coptic spell used an Olive-branch whip to drive away demons; another rite drove demons from the possessed using fresh branches placed before the afflicted person, accompanied by utterances invoking protective spirits.

The scattering of Olive branches and twigs prior to magical operations was used in some ancient formulae; ancient Greeks regarded shoots of Olive with much the same reverence as Vine, crediting them with powers of Purification. Dry branches are burnt in Kenyan folk practice as a ceremonial fumigant. In Spanish folk magic, leaves and branches are regarded as powerful anti-witchcraft magic and are used against the Evil Eye, and the Bedouin use a smudge from burning leaves to protect animals from the same. This same operation is also in practice in Pervuvian folk magic.

In Mycenaean sepulchers, in Sparta, and elsewhere in Greece, Olive branches and leaves had strong funerary associations. When the Pythagoreans buried their dead, they placed the bodies on beds of Olive, Black Poplar, and Myrtle, trees sacred to underworld deities. Other Greek customs employed the wood for funeral pyres. Attesting to the tree's sacred status, one Athenian law forbade the cutting of Olive wood, but had a safe clause for wood needed for funerary rites.

Olive leaves and branches sometimes still appear at modern Greek funerals.

The tree is also credited with increasing sensitivity to spirits and the powers of divination. In one ancient Græco-Ægyptian spell, tree branches were placed beneath the left side of the head before sleep (along with a parchment describing the matter at hand, inscribed in Myrrh ink) to obtain prophetic dreams.

The hardwood branches are also esteemed for their magical embodiments of the tree's power. In Greek lore, the poisoner-sorceress Medea stirred up her potent brews with a wand of Olive wood. Later magical operations from the *Grand Grimoire* prescribe the creation of a divining rod from a virgin branch of Olive. The branch is taken with three strokes of the left hand, in the names of Elohim, Metatron, Adonai & Shemhamphorash. As well as invoking these intelligences at the cutting of the rod, their names and signs may also be carved thereon. A wand of Olive wood is used to conjure lightning strikes against an enemy in Southern African Bathoso sorcery.

OLOLIÚQUE

Ipomœa corymbosa
Convolvulaceæ (Morning Glory Family)

A TWINING perennial herb with heart-shaped leaves, Ololiúque was a major psychoactive plant of the Aztecs. Its white, nectareous bell-shaped flowers grow in dense clusters, each blossom producing a single-seeded round capsule. In Nahuatl, its name is *coaxihuitli* or 'snake plant' perhaps from its tendrils or ophidian habitus; the Zapotec name is *piule*. Now considered a member of the Morning Glory genus, it was previously classified as genera *Rivea* and *Turbina.*

Reported folk therapies include use as a diuretic, carminative, febrifuge, aphrodisiac, and contraceptive. Topical applications have been used in treatment of gout. The plant is rich in alkaloids, containing ergine (d-lysergic acid amide or LSA); isoergine; chanoclavine; elymoclavine; ergometrine; and lysergol. Like many botanicals containing ergoline alkaloids, the herb has been used in childbirth to induce labor; there are also reports of women employing the plant as a contraceptive by drinking an infusion of the seed, with juice of Lemon, on the last day of menstruation.

> When the priests of the Indians wish to contact the sprits of the dead, they partake of these seeds so that they may become senseless and then see thousands of devilish forms and phantoms around them.
>
> FRANCISCO HERNANDEZ
> *Nova Plantarum, Animalium, et Mineralium*
> *Mexicanorum Historia, 1651*

It is aligned with the Moon, particularly from its appearance, as well as its associations with magic, divination and witchcraft. Its occult powers are Visionary, Divination, Summoning and Aphrodisiac. Ololiúque is particularly associated with the Aztec divinity Macuilxochitl, known as *Five-Flower*, one of the gods of excess and its consequences. He was associated with Xochipilli, the 'Prince of Flowers', who is linked with a number of intoxicating and visionary plants endemic to Mexico. The seeds were held in such reverence that they were given shrine space, as well as sacrificial offerings, in Aztec homes. Modern Zapotecs employ the seeds for divinations to locate lost objects.

> ...these prophets make use ololiuhqui or of peyote to solve these riddles, in the way already described. They say a venerable old man appears to them who says that he is the ololiuhqui, and that he has come at their call in order to help them in whatever way might be necessary.
>
> HERNANDO RUIZ DE ALARCÓN
> *Treatise on the Heathen Superstitions*
> *That Today Live Among the Indians*
> *Native to This New Spain, 1629*

The name *Ololiúque*, meaning in Nahuatl 'thing become round like a ball', refers to the spherical seed-capsule; the Aztecs also knew it by the name *Cuexpalli*. Given the impressive array of powers the plant possesses, and the imposition of Spanish Catholic demonology upon the plant, it is easy to imagine the righteous outrage the seeds provoked in clerical minds. Alarcón was clear to state that the seeds were drunk in infusion. It was used magically for finding lost objects or straying partners, as well as disease divination. He remarked that seers who used it "...believe that a demon resides in the seeds who, after they have been eaten, comes out and reveals to the asker whatever he wanted to know."

The Spirit-Retinue of Ololiuque

Amplification, Vivication, Jubilance, Enspheration, Efflorescence, Passion, Deliquescence, Nacreous Scintillation, Acroamatic Transmission, Ophidian Sway, Heads of Wisdom, Seminal Whisperings, and Daimonic Advocacy.

Fray Diego Duran noted that the mixture was prepared in ceremonial gourds and placed before the statues of divinity prior to use. The following is a prayer to the herb, invoking it against a number of heats, or fevers:

> Come now, come hither, Green Woman: behold the green heat and the brown heat: remove thou the flaming or scarlet heat, the yellow heat, or by this token, I send thee to the seven caves. And I do command thee, put it not off til tomorrow or another day, for sooner or later thou will be compelled to do it. Who is the God—the so powerful and superior one—who can destroy the work of thy hand. It is I who command it, the prince of enchantment.

The plant was one of the primary visionary allies of the Ticitl, the ancient Aztec sorcerers. These Aztec priests of the god Tezcatlipoca ('Smoking Mirror') used an ointment called *Teotlacualli* which contained copious amounts of tobacco, the ashes of poisonous insects and spiders, caterpillars, salamanders, vipers and soot. To this was added crushed seeds of Ololiuque. According to the writings of the Spanish prelate Acosta, the priests "...became cruel in spirit. At night they went alone into obscure caves and boasted that wild and savage beasts feared them because of the strength of their mixture."

ONION

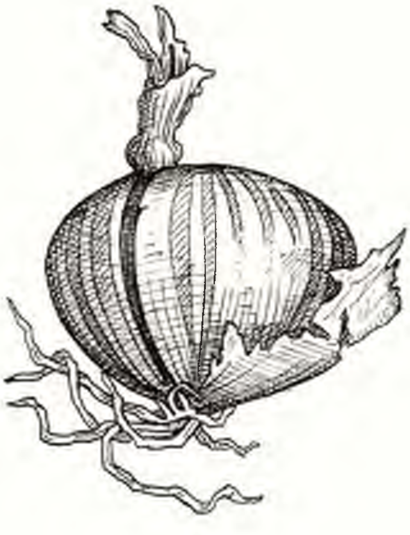
Allium spp.

Amaryllidaceæ (Lily Family)

A BIENNIAL herb growing to 50 cm, with an aromatic bulb, greens, and flowers, with near-cosmopolitan distribution in the northern hemisphere. Because the Onion has been in cultivation for at least seven millennia, its exact point of geographic evolution is uncertain. The genus *Allium* contains over 400 species, including Garlic, Leeks, Chives and Rampions; almost all are odorous and esteemed for culinary use. The Vineyard Onion (*A. vineale*) is a common weed pest in cereal crops and is mildly toxic, with more pronounced poisonous effects upon cats and dogs.

Folk medicine has employed it with some success in treating rheumatism and earache; Onion is also used to quiet a cough, and as a topical application for baldness. In ancient Egypt, Onions were sometimes prescribed as a specific for 'Blood Eating', an unidentified wasting disease of the limbs. Onion was also employed in mummification. Among its most important chemical particulars are thiosulfinates, sulfinyldisulfides, glycolic acid, phenolic acids, and essential oils.

The use of the bulb skins to obtain coloring is ancient. When boiled in strong decoction and used with alum mordant, they yield coloration for yarn dyestuff, expressing a range from bright yellow to orange, to light brown, depending on the source material. Simple golden, or golden-brown inks or washes, may be obtained by strong decoction without the use of mordants or fixatives.



Its principal magical use is as a broad-spectrum disinfectant, being similar to its cousin Garlic, and a remover of obstacles, particularly malodorous spirits. In the Hindu philosophy of Samkhya, Onion as well as Garlic is considered a tamasic food, that is, belonging to *támas* or darkness, being in essence a depleting physical force. Avicenna linked the eating of onions with unseemly dreams, and their frequent place in western symbolism aligns with poverty and agrestic concerns.

Romany magic employs Onion to banish intrusive earth-spirits from the breasts of a mother whose child has refused to suck. An Asian Onion known as Pukusa (*Allium victorialis* var. *platyphyllum*) is used magically by Ainu shamans to forcibly repel disease-causing demons. In India, the Hooker Chive, also known as Phulun Zung (*Allium hookeri*) is a valued ally for protection against evil spirits; like other Alliums it is also a valued culinary plant.

A Hoodoo spell from Virginia uses peelings of red Onion, burnt together with sulfur in a closed room for a day, to protect the user from harm. Curiously, a similar spell from Georgia was used to attract wealthy men.

Heathen charms employed an Onion for binding noisome spirits by suspending a bulb by a string in a demon-infested room. In a day's time, it attracted and sealed these troublemakers within its pungent flesh, whereafter it could be removed from the home and buried or cast into a stream. Similarly, many old spells utilize a bisected Onion to absorb all rank and malodorous influences, including disease-causing demons. Much in the manner of the witches' curse-mommet, Onions transfixed with pins are used as a curse to cast internal pains into a victim.

The Spirit-Retinue of Onion

Objuration, Absorption, Accumulation, Influence,
Decontamination, Encompassment, Emphatic
Gusto, Tempered Combustion, Rustic
Appetites, Inflamed Pungency,
Guttural Exhalations,
Ingurgitated Evils,
& Sequestered
Filth.

The old art of *cromnysmantia* is divination by onions. A curious means of Onion-prognostication specified the naming of several individual bulbs, then setting them beside the hearth. That bulb first to sprout bore the name of the seeker's future spouse. Similarly, Russian girls set out onions to foretell their loves to come: the girls whose bulb sprouted first would be the first to marry.

Some years ago, I was acquainted with a practitioner of folk magic whose principal plant ally was the Onion, and whose very personality wafted its sulfurous influence. His arsenal of charms and spells utilized the bulbs in a multitude of ways, but his specialty was evictions, not merely of 'negative influences' or earthbound spirits, but of living persons, from houses, institutions or even entire communities. His avocation was the subject of much unseemly rumor and mockery by more 'transcendent' practitioners until that uncomfortable moment when it became plain that his operations worked frightfully well. From that moment onward, his services were much in demand, particulary by high ceremonial magicians whose complex and florid conjurations of the spirits failed to achieve their desired ends.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Exorcism, Binding, Healing, and Protection from Disease.
Element: Fire.
Planet: Mars and Saturn.
Saint: Luke.
Virtue: Antisepsis.
Body Part: Blood.
Therapeutic: Four Point Restraint.
Affliction: Sociopathy.
Emblem: A spherical whirlwind of fire with four demons chained to its core.

OPIUM POPPY

Papaver somniferum

Papaveraceæ (Poppy Family)

AN annual herb native to the Mediterranean or Asia Minor, growing to 0.5 meters, with glaucous leaves, and flowers of white, mauve, purple, or red coloration. These ripen into the swollen, globose seed-capsules which immortalize the plant in artistic representation. A large number of cultivars exist, selected either for seed production, ornamental value, or pharmaceutical vigor. Many cultivars are bred to be medicinally inferior, in an attempt by governments and industrial pharmaceutical manufacturers to prevent private cultivation and secure an Opium hegemony. A primordial cultigen, the Poppy is not found in a truly wild state. It was cultivated by Neolithic lakeside dwellers in Switzerland, and ancient cuneiform texts refer to Opium as the 'Plant of Joy'.

The art of Opium harvest, now prohibited by law in the United States, was once practiced by country doctors and herbalists who valued it as Nature's finest anodyne. The ripened capsules were lanced at least a fortnight after the flower petals dropped, then gently incised to a depth of 1 mm, either vertically, horizontally, or in a spiral pattern. This wounding produced a fresh, acrid latex, which quickly began to darken; the hardened secretions were collected the following morning. The remaining capsules or 'heads' were dried and later and boiled to make a tranquilizing tea.

Morphine is the most powerful naturally-occuring analgesic in the world, and the Poppy contains more than 40 alkaloids including morphine, codeine, papaverine, narcotine, and thebaine. An infusion of broken capsules in water yielded the ancient preparation *Mekonium*. *Vinum Opii* is opium dissolved in wine, flavored with cinnamon and cloves. *Laudanum*, championed by the alchemist Paracelsus, is tincture of Opium with the nausea-inducing alkaloid narcotine removed. Formerly official in the United States Pharmacopoeia was *Syrup Papaveris*, made from concentrated Poppy capsules, effective in doses as low as one fluidrachm (4 cc).

Opium's additional actions on the body are stimulant (in small doses), hypnotic, antispsasmodic, sedative, anodyne, narcotic, and euphoriant. Morphine alkaloids are present in both the Opium Poppy and the Poppy of Troy (*P. setigerum*), as well as in trace amounts in Corn Poppy (*Papaver rhoeas*).

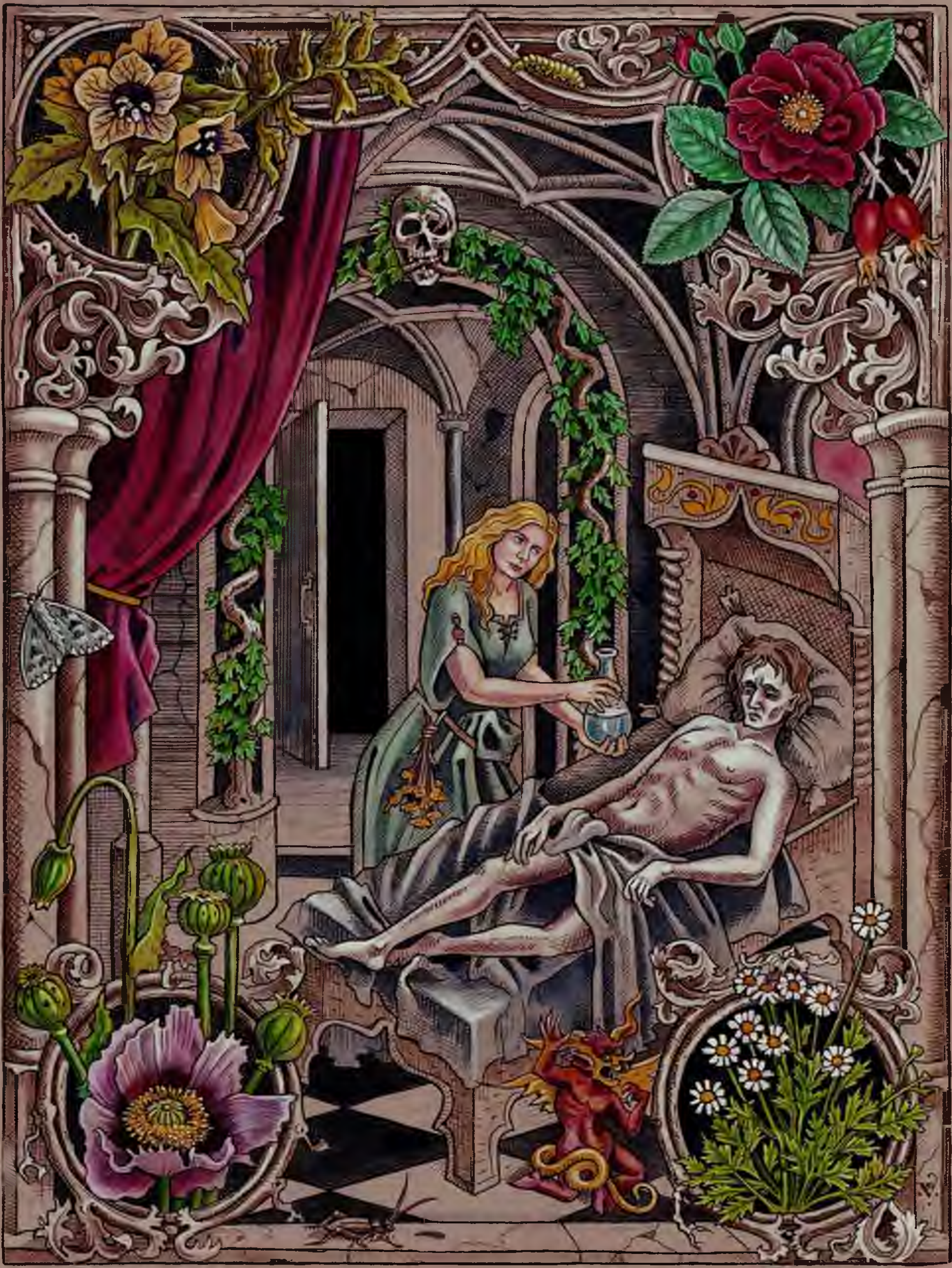
Some persons experience nausea or cramping following the ingestion of Opium; others suffering from conditions of vertigo, nausea or dizziness are made stable by it, and their conditions are soothed or stabilized. Still others have the displeasure of being afflicted by 'the itch,' an irritating sensation which seems to occur under the skin.

Its power as a sedative and analgesic, combined with other plants such as Mandrake, constituted early anæsthesia and enabled ancient surgeries. A gruesome account of human vivisection occurs in Levino Lennio's *De Gli Occulte Miracoli* of 1560, made philosophically palatable by the administration of Opium:

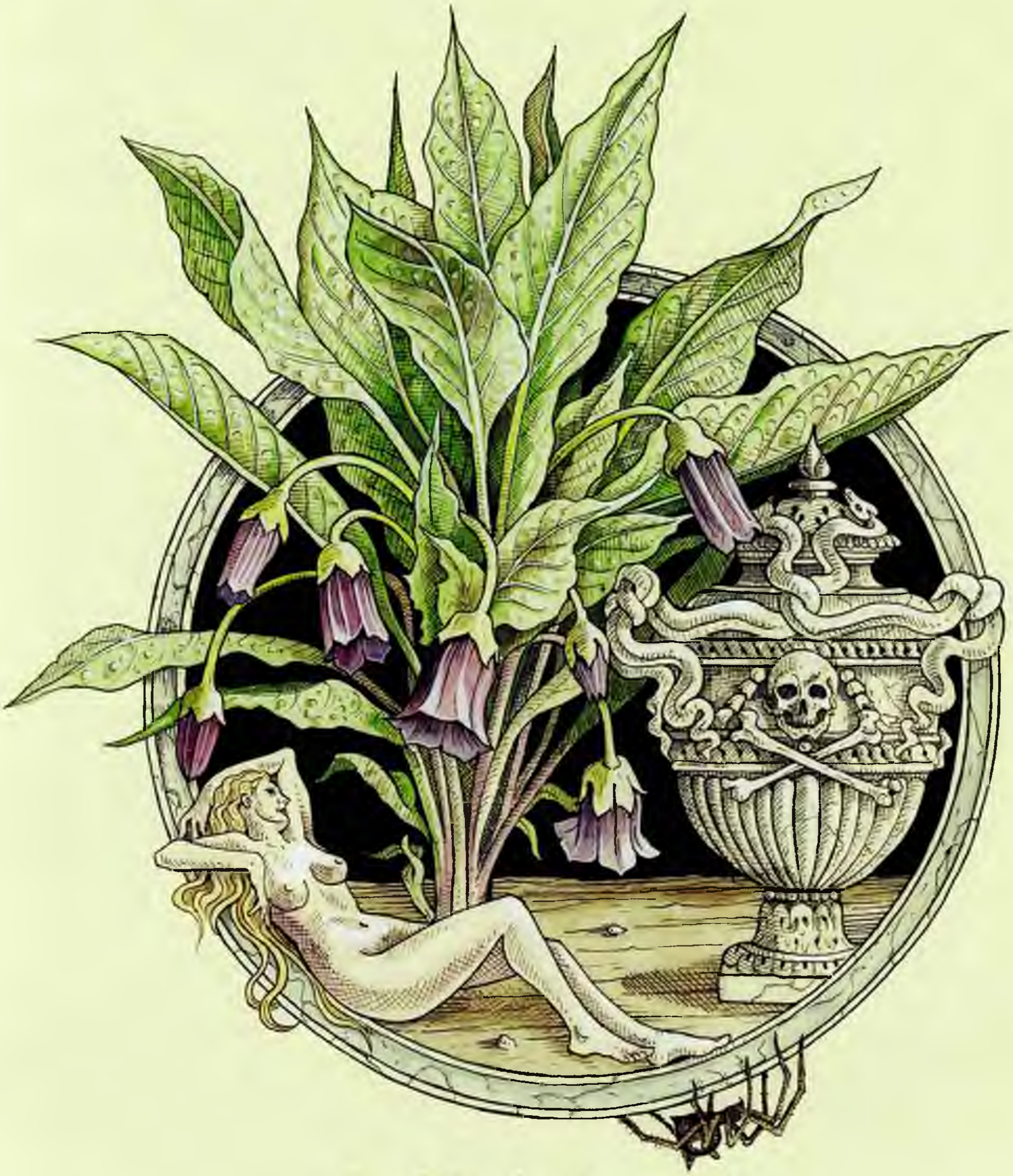
> Physicians in Italy are accustomed to obtain from princes certain persons who have been sentenced to death, in order to do anatomies on them. And that the body be more whole and better disposed, they give the malefactor to drink two or three drams of opium, that is, black poppy juice in the purest wine. Which potion first makes them ruddy of face, and laughing as with sardonic laugh; then, growing uncommonly sleepy, they doze off, and thus sleeping, they die, with such impulse does the opium course through their veins. When the corpse is cut open, the opium is found to have come to rest in the heart.

As a ritual inceptor of narco-æsthesia, Opium can be used in sexual magic for prolonged orgasm, though it may, in some, present impediments to erectile function, in both men and women. Nonetheless, even in cases where it may distort sexual function, it excels as a preceptor of the supra-sensual.

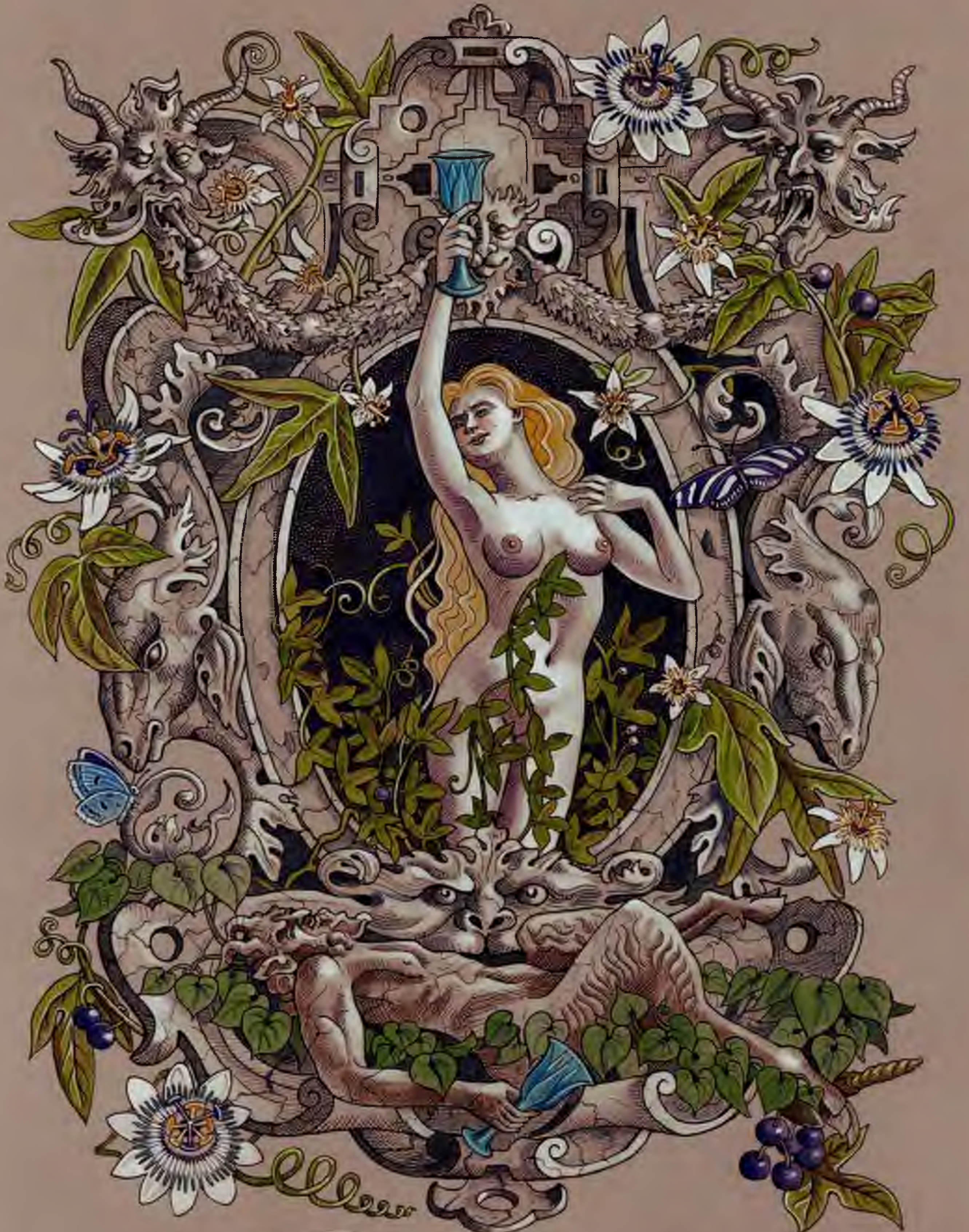
Opium was also a favored ingredient of aphrodisiac philters, cordials and pastilles. Traditional



Ars Moriendi

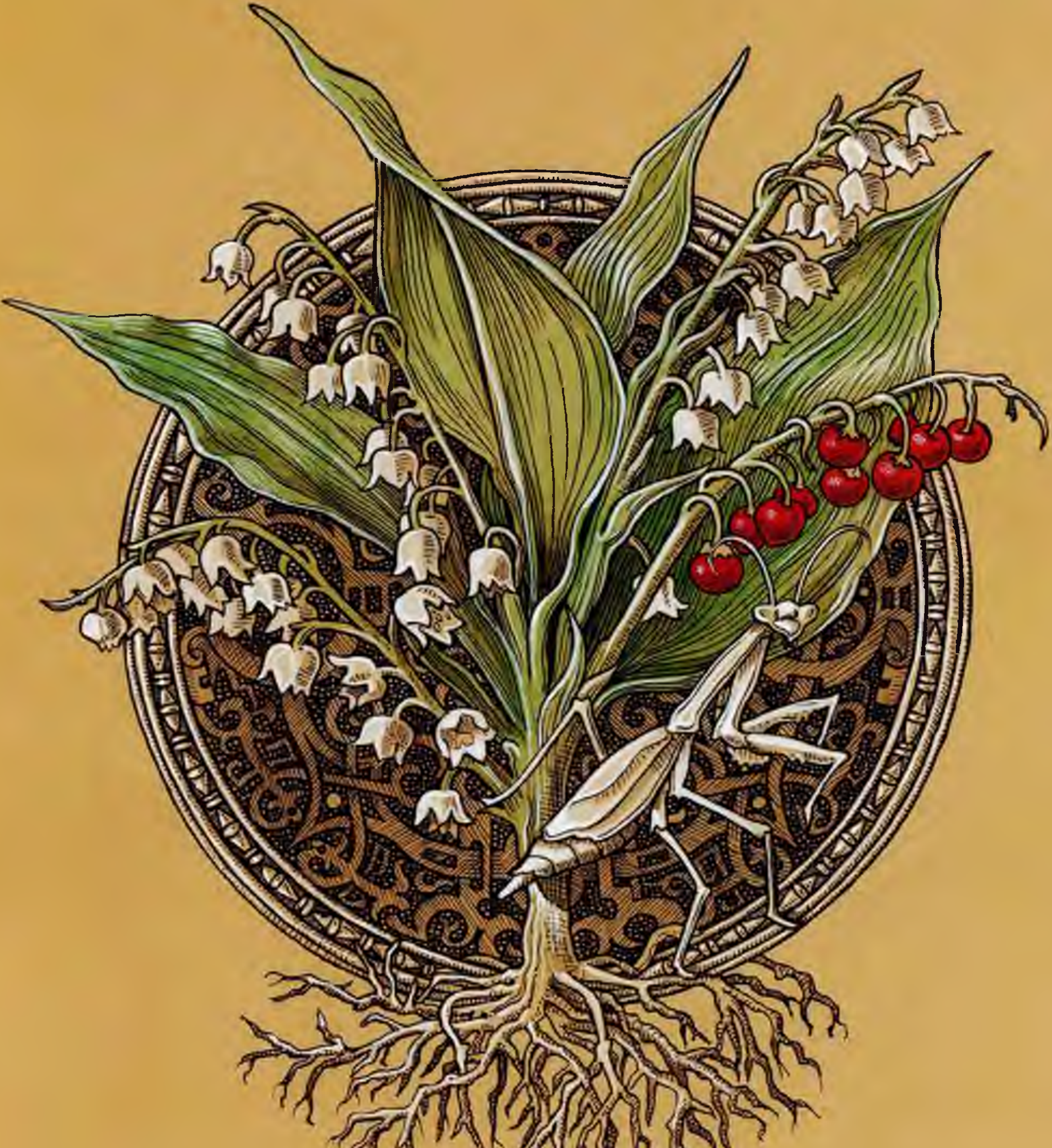


Scopolia carniolica



Et Veneris dic Vincula necto

Lily of the Valley



plant adjuncts to aphrodisiac Opium preparations included Frankincense, Nutmeg, Cubebs, Asafoetida, Ginger, Anise, Betel, Myrrh, Coriander, Sandalwood, Ginseng, Coconut, Cinnamon, Zeodary, Fennel, Cardamon, Cumin, Saffron, and Syrian Rue. Johann Weyer mentions a phantasmagoric philter containing Opium, a Turkish preparation called *Heiran Luc,* which he speculated also contained Henbane:

> ...and if it is drunk with wine and Myrrh, allegedly various images float before the eyes, and one canot stop laughing unless he drinks of palm wine with the addition of pine-nut kernels and pepper and honey.

Some years ago, while attending a gathering of herbalists near Cobb Mountain, California, I suffered a hiking injury which proved an impediment to subsequent movement and range of motion. On account of it being a gathering of folk practitioners, it was no surprise that once the injury was noticed by others a bottle of laudanum was produced, and a quantity exceeding therapeutic dose was taken. This dispensation became the object of many hours of hypnotic reverie upon the atavistic shade of the Poppy. Adrift on a sea of floral exudate, I awakened to the subtle grandeur of its reveries. Each sensation became simultaneously as a word and a image, and at long last I understood with somatic precision the phantasies of Coleridge, but also the *iatrochemistry* of Paracelsus. At the moment of reification, I stood at a place where four roads met: their names were Beauty, Ecstasy, Somnolence, and Oblivion. The place of their convergence was the seat of the Poet.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF OPIUM POPPY

Euphoria, Forgetfulness, Phantasie, Suspension, Torpor, Oblivion, Itching, Desperate Craving, Obstipation, Diabolic Pact, Skeletal Wasting, Hooded Silence and Terminal Mercy.

Like Mustard, the seeds of the Poppy may be invoked in varied charms and spells to unleash chaos and confusion upon one's enemies. This is accomplished by scattering them to the wind, either in the direction of the victim, or in their pathway, where they are sure to step.

Poppy seeds flung upon the coals of a fire may provide a negative or affirmative omen. If smoke from the incinerated seeds rises quickly and directly upwards, the omen is good. If the smoke remains low and creeps, the omen is evil.

Opium is topically effective and has appeared in medieval and early modern formulations of witches' flying ointments.

CORRESPONDENCES

Magical Powers: Summoning, Coercion, Dreaming, Funerary.
Planets: The Moon and Saturn.
Deific Forms: Thoth, Isis, Morpheus, Hypnos, Somnus, Nyx.
Virtue: Ease.
Body Part: Nervous System / Dreaming Body.
Therapeutic: Manumission.
Affliction: Slavery.
Embodied State: Narcosis.
Emblem: A sleeper amidst a field, beneath the stars, watched over by a hooded figure, with face obscured.

ORANGE

Citrus sinensis

Rutaceæ (Rue Family)

ORANGE is an evergreen tree with dark green glossy leaves and white, fragrant flowers. It grows to 8 meters but often attains shorter heights given the numerous dwarf and semi-dwarf varieties available in silviculture. The wood is hard and suitable for working and turning; it is also used for smoking meats. Long under human cultivation, its point of geographic evolution for the Orange tree is obscure, likely to be southeastern Asia; this is further complicated by its complex genetic history where it has frequently hybridized with other Citrus species. The tree was at one time a powerful status symbol of affluent Europeans, who built orangeries to protect the trees during winter. The orangery, what now would be known as an elaborate cold frame, was the original technological foundation of the modern greenhouse.

> Of the greatest value of all are spring flowers, cedar, or orange leaves, and sweet-scented apples...
>
> MARSILIO FICINO
> *De Religio Christiana*, 1568

The portions used are the leaves, blossoms, fruits and their essential oil. In magical operations the Orange encompasses the powers of Fertility, Allure, Wealth, and Happiness. The qualities of its aroma are sweet, sharp, bright, refreshing, and rousing; it elevates that which it comes into contact with. Powerful, but with subtle odorous components, it is this delicate essence, almost fleeting in perception, which can make a *Cocktail Sazerac*.

Both fruits and flowers of Orange are traditional ingredients in Love, Lust and Fertility charms, as well as a general magical potentiator. Medieval Muslim brides bedecked themselves with Orange-blossom as a sign of voluptuous nubility; according to some, the Crusaders brought this custom to Christendom. The tree's planetary ruler is the Sun.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF ORANGE

Zeal, Alertness, Resuscitation, Fantasy, Celebration, Merriment, Elation, Ambitious Design, Ambrosial Repast, Filled Treasuries, Auspicious Occasions, Opulent Furnishings, & Flushed Nubility.

Christian mystics have made use of the wood as rosary beads, known as *Spinae Christi* (Christ's Thorns), although they are smooth. Some exceptionally rare rosaries are made by the monks of St. Sabina at the Aventine in Rome, the are beads made from tiny, blackened dessicated oranges from a tree said to have been planted by St. Dominic in their garden.

In the Brazilian religious tradition of Candomblé, fragrant sprigs of Orange leaves carried on the person are a talisman against the Evil Eye. It is also frequently used in the Candomblé abô, or sacred magical baths.

Orange blossom water, known as *ma zhar*, is used in Morocco to ritually sprinkle the tombs of the dead, and visitors to the grave. In Mexico, the flowers are used to strew the graves of those passed beyond on *El Dia de los Difuntos* (Day of the Dead).

Orange Bitters

The formula makes use of the highly aromatic Satsuma Mandarin (*Citrus unshiu*).

Satsuma Mandarin, dried peel	20 g
fresh Orange zest	10 g
fresh Lemon zest	5 g
Cardamom pods	3
Gentian root, dried	2 g

❡ In a dark place, steep all plant materials in sealed glass vessel with 250 ml. of 151 proof (75.5% ABV) spirit for three weeks. At the consummation of the steeping period, strain and bottle the liquid.

OREGANO

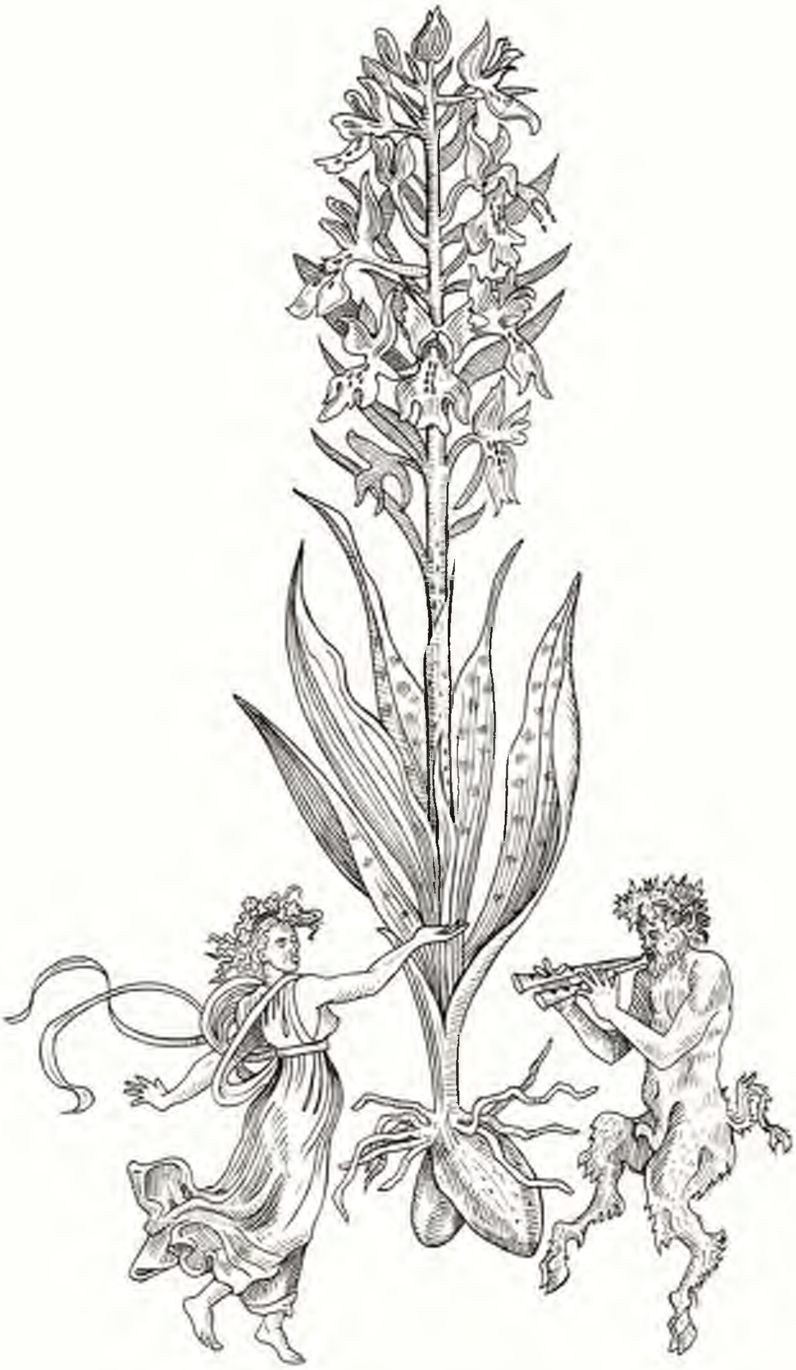
Origanum spp.

Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

OREGANO is a shrubby, perennial herb with glaucous opposite-arranged leaves of elliptical shape, with white, pink, or lilac flowers. Some forms, including cultivated varieties, have purple-tinged stems. There are about 55 distinct species of *Origanum*, all aromatic, including Marjoram (*O. majorana*) and Dittany of Crete (*O. dictamnus*). The valued spice blend *za'atar* of the Levant often relies upon *Origanum syriacum* as its herbal basis; in Morocco the corresponding plant it is *Origanum compactum*, also used for flavoring tea. Propagation is by division, layering, or by greenwood cutting.

Its odor is warm, spicy, camphoraceous, and peppery, bespeaking a powerfully arrayed host of phenols, among them the antibacterial compound thymol. For harvesting the herb at the peak of its virtues, cut stalks with unopened flower-buds. Its aromatic principles are readily extracted in tincture, for which one may use the leaves, stems and flowers. An efficacious topical salve made be made from the dried leaves, whose virtues are readily extracted into a lipidic base.

Oregano is an herb of Mercury, and its occult powers are Love, Protection from Poison, Ward Against Noxious Spirits, and Healing. Gerard metions an infusion of Oregano in wine as "a remedy against the bitings and stingings of venomous beasts." In India one of its names was Murwa, and it was accorded the powers of Protection and Revelation. Some Afro-Caribbean warding enchantments entreat Oregano for protection against police. If Oregano grew on a grave, it portended the happiness of the departed in the afterlife.



ORCHID

Orchis spp.
Orchidaceæ (Orchid Family)

AT this writing, Genus *Orchis* is comprised of about 60 accepted species, having been recently reduced through subdivision, from a former count of over a thousand. It is characterized by tuberous plants with an upright stem and striking, diverse inflorescences of many colors. Some consider *Orchis* to be the genus of True Orchids, but there is a common practice, even among botanists and horticulturists, of referring to all plants within the Orchid Family—nearly 30,000 species—as Orchids.

Among the virtues of the planets, most Orchids are considered to fall under the dominion of Venus; their occult power is generally amorous, and used in rituals and charms of Love, Allure, Fortification, and Charisma. Testicular roots and rhizomes signal the plant's alliance with satyrs and sileni, the Orchid thus holds magical dominion over Libido; male lust in particular. However, some spells employ the juice of the blossoms, rubbed into the hands, to bewitch the fingers such that you may touch a person who lusts after you, and they will desire you no more.

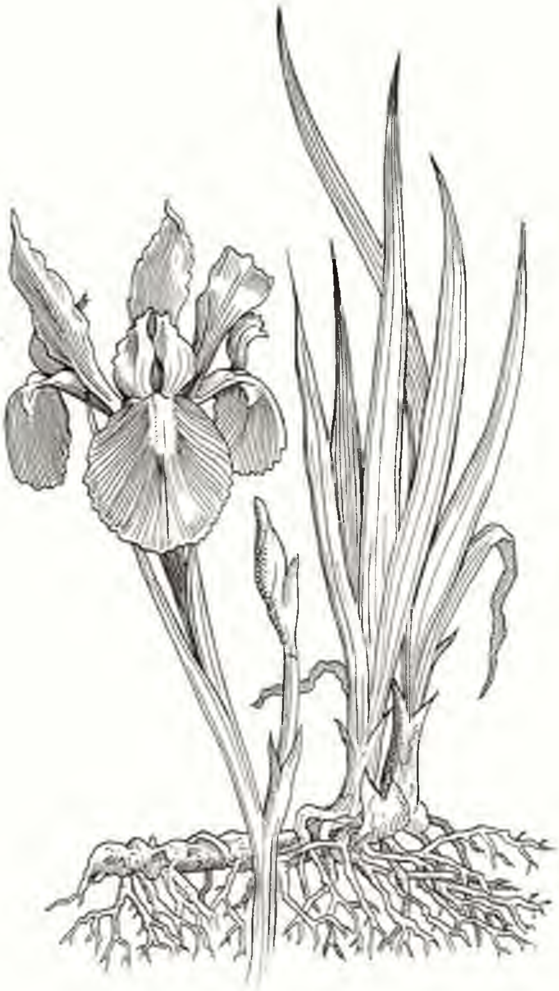
In the work of conception, Pliny records that the larger portions of the plant, if eaten by men prior to the procreative act, will engender male offspring; likewise, if the smaller portions are eaten by the woman, a girl will result. In Bhutan, the orchid *Dactylorhiza hatagirea* is a valued aphrodisiac.

Native American Orchid species were also used for their power as love-charms. *Platanthera dilatata* or Leafy White Orchid, was used by Native Americans for sweet-scented body perfumes and washes to attract men. Men and women used it to attain riches and property. Tribes of South America, as well various African peoples, have also regarded endemic Orchids as potent allies for sexual sorcery.

The Ojibway regarded the Rein Orchid (*Coeloglossum viride* var. *virescens*) as a potent love medicine, and the root was sometimes added to the food of the unsuspecting object of the sorcerer's desires. The women of the Forest Potawotami used the Intermediate Bog Orchid (*Habenaria dilatata*) as a love-charm to attract a husband; the plant was rubbed or painted upon the cheek.

Occasionally *Orchis mascula* or Early Purple Orchid in some regions carried associations with Death, but far more often it was an herb of Allure and Desire, much like its other Orchid-kin. Pounded or ground, the thriving portion of the root was a common ingredient of love philters. This herb was known also by the name of Mogra Myra; its repute as an aphrodisiac was so strong that merely holding the tuber in the hand would ensure fornication. According to Charles Godfrey Leland, one Romany philtre employs Devil's Hand (*Orchis maculata*), along with the menses of the sorceress; this in turn is fed to the man whose love she seeks.

Medieval English sources refer to an orchid called Palma Christi (Christ's Hand), likely due to the tendency of certain Orchids to produce hand-shaped corms or roots as is the case with *Dactylorhiza* spp. The researcher of Anglo-Saxon customs Stephen Pollington has suggested this may reflect a Christian reconfiguration of an older myth formerly attributed to a lost pagan god.



ORRIS

Iris pallida, I. germanica I. germanica × *florentina*
Iridaceæ (Iris Family)

ORRIS is an archaic cultigen grown primary for the alluring scent of its dried root, grown in ancient Egypt, Italy, North Africa and throughout the Medieterranean. Growing to 1 meter in height, it is a perennial with glaucous blade-shaped leaves and a white flower, sometimes with a yellow beard. Various strains of the aromatic root may be sought out by the keen gardener; it is easily grown and generally it answers to the same cultural requirements as most Irises. *I. pallida* is known for its pale lavender blossom. Orris was also known as Queen Elizabeth Root.

The roots of many Iris species act as expectorants and purgatives when taken internally. From ancient times to the present, the rhizome has been used to flavor wines and liqueurs, perfume the body, and lend scent to pomanders; it is also an excellent addition to preparations of bitters. Orris-root amulets were used in the Middle Ages to drive away the plague.

> But yet none can so sweet a root produce.
> My upper parts are trim and fair,
> My lower breath a grateful Air,
> I am a Flower for sight, a Drug for use.
>
> ABRAHAM COWLEY
> *The Sixth Book of Plants, 1689*

Aging the dried root for at least three years causes a maturation and intensification of its aromatics. Subject to steam distillation, the aged root yields the costly aromatic fraction Orris Concrete, a waxy substance with a warm fragrance redolent of balsam, wood, and haunting floral notes resembling violent. Dried roots and their powder also give forth this aroma in a lesser degree, and a resin is also extracted using solvents.

It is allied with the powers of Venus and Mercury. Its powers in magic and ritual are Allure, Beneficence, Love, and Harmony.

In the Middle Ages, Orris was regarded as a root of love and the powdered rhizome was added to food and drink to encharm those who ate of it. Folk magic using the root for attracting lovers relates that the herb is especially adept at enchanting men. One Vodou love charm used the powdered root to dust the clothes of the person to be charmed.

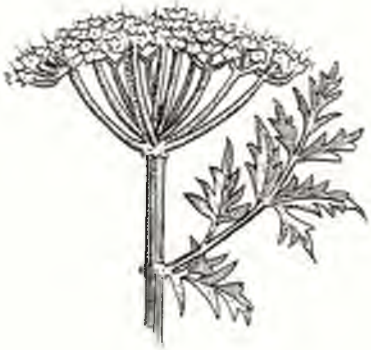
OSHÁ

Lingusticum poteri

Apiaceæ (Dill Family)

AN HERB of both wet and high places, its preferred home is in the rich organic ferment of saturated subalpine meadows. In appearance it bears clear morphological kinships with toxic umbellifers such as *Conium* (Poison Hemlock), with which it shares habitat. Bearing the classic filigreed leaves, and delicate umbels of white flowers, Osha reaches a height of just under one meter. The plant notoriously resists attempts at cultivation and is almost exlusively gathered in the wild. In vulgar nomenclature, the herb is called by the common names Deer Eye, Bear Medicine, Porter's Lovage, and Indian Parsley, among others.

Like many fragrant apiaceous plants, the root is the source of its medicinal and occult power, and it is endowed is endowed with a spicy, buttery fragrance. As used in folk curing, it is valued for its properties as an expectorant, emmenagogue, and carminative. Osha is used to treat sundry cold, coughs, and fevers, and as a vigorous expectorant for the expulsion of phlegm. It is one of the most important medicinal herbs of the North American flora.



Its spiritual essences are chiefly purifying, restorative and protective, emanating the properties of Beneficence, Hex-Breaking, Protection from Maleficia, and Protection from the Evil Eye. Among some Native Americans, the root was carried as a talisman to attract good fortune. In Spanish-American magic, the plant is considered to have great strength of drawing out evils of the flesh, and for this purpose a piece of the root is tied near the wound to pull out corrupt humors. Shavings of the root-crown are a powerful incense on their own, smoldered on a charcoal or hot rock.

PALMÆ

THE former name of the plant family including all Palm trees, now called Arecaceæ, named for genus *Areca* which includes *Areca catechu* or the Betel Nut Palm. Growing primarily in tropical climates, the Palmae exhibit great species diversity with 181 genera and approximately 2600 individual species. Cycads, which bear a simple morphological resemblance to Palms, are not in fact members, and are instead spread over three separate plant families.

PALO SANTO

Bursera graveolens
Burseraceæ (Torchwood Family)

PALO Santo is a deciduous tree widely distributed in the dry tropical forests of Central and South America, and in the Galapagos Islands. Wizened and tortuous in habit in response to arid environment, the tree has pale bark and is mostly leafless except for a short period of time. The fruit is an aril, being a black seed sheathed in a crimson pulp. As an ethnomedicine, Palo Santo is venerated as an anti-malefic; the wood and resin are burnt to expel noxious spirits. In addition to small sections of wood, essential oil of varying quality may also be encountered in commerce. It is also known as Incense Tree, because of its appealing odor.

In magical plant traditions of Northern Peru, it is used as a topical, as well as a bath, to dispel negative influences. Used as incense, twigs, shavings, powder and resin are burnt against evil influence, and to sweep noxious energies from the body. Mirroring its metaphysical properties, the smoke of the wood also enjoys a reputation as an insecticide. Like many other trees of the Torchwood family, it is wholesome, appealing, strengthening, healing, and protective. In addition to its function chasing evil, its smoke may be used effectively as an adjunct to meditation.

Sap from its relative Torote (*Bursera microphylla*), native to the Southwestern United States, was used by the Cahuilla peoples of Southern California as a gambling charm, and for 'acquiring power'.

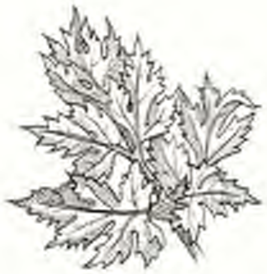
PARSLEY

Petroselinum crispum
Apiaceæ (Dill Family)

'ROCK-CELERY' as denoted by the name *Petroselinum*, is a low-growing biennial or perennial herb with fragrant leaves and stems and a large, white taproot. After producing a profusion of white flowers, it gives rise to aromatic fruits or seeds. Parsley is native to the Mediterranean, where it has long been used as a fragrant salad herb, but it is now cultivated in much of Europe, North America, and parts of Asia. Essential oil, containing a wealth of mind and body-altering compounds, is distilled from the fruit. Wine made from the unripe fruits, then distilled, will yield wondrously strange aromatic fractions which are completely out of reach to the human olfactory bulb when smelling or tasting the fresh plant. The aromatic roots may be dried and added to incense, producing an agreeable odor when judiciously burned.

Among its many actions upon the body, Parsley acts as an antimicrobial, antirheumatic, antiseptic, carminative, diuretic, depurative, emmenagogue, febrifuge, hypotensive, laxative, stomachic, and uterine tonic. The root is diuretic, the seeds carminative, and the leaves a mild stimulant. The fresh herb may be used as a urinary tract tonic and to treat complaints of that organ system as well; folk medicine has also employed Parsley for treatment of jaundice and rheumatism. In Hungarian folk curing, a poultice of the fresh leaves was used to soothe the stings of bees and wasps.

Petroselinum is traditionally aligned with the planetary forces of Mars and Mercury, these actions being harmonized with Venus. Its powers in magical formulae are Love, Prophecy, Divination, Exorcism Protection from Lightning, Funerary Offering, and Triumph. Its especial virtues are Conquering and Rousing, owing to its effects as an exhilarant.



THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF PARSLEY

Alertness, Revival, Hygiene, Refreshment, Stimulus, Invitation, Magnamanity, Circulatory Effusion, Sensual Vitality, Vascular Excitation, Pelvic Invigoration, Thickened Verdure, and Virid Queendom.

In antiquity, Romans sometimes planted Parsley over graves. The Greeks used to strew burial grounds with the herb, and the phrase "to be in need of Parsley" was used to refer to persons near death.

Some believe that the widespread propensity in Western cultures to eat Parsley as a garnish with meals is because the ancients considered it an impeccable remedy for poison. A fumigant made from the burning plant has been used to drive away venomous beasts.

An amusing adage relates that only malevolent sorcerers, witches or rogues can successfully grow Parsley from seed. The act of transplanting Parsley is widely regarded to bring misfortune. Yet, lovers of the plant need not debate this, nor suffer the misguided outgassings of so many who do. From experience, it is clear that, given the correct microclimate and garden habitat, the herb will promiscuously re-seed by itself, rendering the question of cultivation moot.

Parsley, or plants resembling it, appear in some recipes for the *Unguentum Sabbati*, the psychoactive 'flying ointment' of the medieval European witches, alongside deadly toxins such as *Aconitum napellus*. Strict 'entheogenic purists' have been quick to dismiss the possibility that such a 'pedestrian' herb could have made any effective psychoactive contribution to the salve. However, given the plant's propensity for increasing circulation, its magical alignment with women and feminine mysteries, its action on the uterus, and the presence of myristicin (a precursor to MDMA), Parsley invites us to silently contemplate what ecstasies might lie beyond the gustatory.

PASSIONFLOWER

Passiflora spp.

Passifloraceæ (Passionflower Family)

PASSIONFLOWERS are climbing or prostrate vines, or sometimes small trees, with original distribution in tropical and South America. They are known for their colorful, ornate and morphologically complex flowers, as well as their fragrant fruits, many of which are edible. In general, the plants are important sources of food for birds and insects, particularly bees and butterflies such as fritillaries.

Passiflora contains about 375 accepted species, its most famous one being the blue and purple flowered *P. incarnata*. Upon its introduction to Europe, it provoked awe and ruminations of theological botany among Christians, who saw in the strange flower affirmations of the Mysteries of Jesus (*Passiflora* is absent from Europe as an endemic genus), through numerological extrapolation. For example, the flower possesses 72 corona filaments, which is also the number of thorns upon Christ's crown. For those not over-steeped in Christian mystery, the flower's appearance might well evoke thoughts of surreality, dreams, nightmares, or the alien biota of author H. P. Lovecraft.

Medicinally, the plant is sedative, antispasmodic, and anodyne. *P. caerulea* is a renowned calmative, similar in effect to Valium, but without heavy-handed sedation. Tea or tincture of the leaves may be taken as a medicament for sleeplessness. The plant contains the alkaloids harmine, harman, harmol, harmalan, passiflorine, as well as assorted glucosides and flavonoids. The harmala alkaloid series are powerful antihelmintics and anti-protozoals. Dried leaves of *P. incarnata* were crushed and smoked as a sedative; some research has suggested aphrodisiac activity from this species. Around three dozen species are endemic to Mexico. in Aztec Medicine, it was considered a strong anti-venom: the pulverized root cortex of Coanenepilli (*P. jorullensis*) was used for rashes, urinary infections and was esteemed as a specific against plague and snakebite. Many species are used in Andean ethnomedicine.

Passionflower is aligned with the Sun, and its magical properties are Purification, Blessing, Consecration, Peace, and Harmony. Candomble tradition sometimes prescribes steeping the leaves of *P. alata* in bathwater for magical cleansing of the individual.

PATCHOULI

Pogostemon cablin; Pogostemon heyænus

Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

A FRAGRANT, perennial herb thriving in the hot and humid climates of Southeast Asia, Patchouli bears a superficial morphological resemblance to Basil, though its leaves are serrated. It is mostly known for the essential oil of commerce, which is available in varying qualities. The oil is extracted principally from leaves and twigs, but the fresh flowers are also fragrant. Dried leaves, which attain a near-black color, may also be used as a fragrant carbonaceous source material for incense. The complex aroma of the plant arises in part from the odorous sesquiterpene alcohol patchoulol ($C_{15}H_{26}O$).

The Spirit-Retinue of Patchouli

Rusticism, Assertion, Awakening, Revival, Perplexity, Contagion, Obsecration, Charisma, Discontinuity, Variance, Earthen Glamor, Carnal Veneration & Umbral Vehemence.

Its powers as used in magic are Allure, Bidding, and Protection from Disease, but it also registers sinister usages such as Hexing, and Death. In some spells emerging from varied traditions of Voodoo, Patchouli is used for hexing, much in the manner of the dread Graveyard Dust and Goofer Dust, either of which may contain Patchouli. Various death-curses, especially employed in Hoodoo, make use of the leaves as well.

For those repelled at the essential oil's incessant popular abuse as a 'hippy' perfume, my counsel to you is this: when seeking the spirit of this plant, avoid that commercial product altogether—it is a narrow (and often clumsy) technical dissection of the plant's character. Rather, allow the living plant into your stewardship, and you will experience its power in a wholly different way. Its aroma, the woodiness balanced by spice, chorophyll and the vigorous efflux of life, will assert itself in delicate ways, and reveal a more comprehensive nature. The living leaf is but one remarkable source of aroma, and the freshly dried leaf another.

An alcohol extraction prepared from both living and dried leaves, is yet another avenue of revelation, used as a concentrated magical wash, liniment or *despojo* for splashing upon the body and ritual arena. For this usage, I combine dried leaves and broken fresh leaves and stems, with a 60% ABV menstruum, rested in a steeping vessel for a month before filtering. The liquid can be concentrated by a second maceration of new material, or by the addition of cured Tobacco.

* * *

PEACH

Prunus persica

Rosaceæ (Rose Family)

A DECIDUOUS tree to 7 meters in height, native to Asia and widely grown in the northern hemisphere. A beloved orchard crop, the tree produces esculent, velvety fruits, which succeed pink flowers in the spring. Like many *Prunus* species, the wood is dense, hard, and aromatic, and suitable for carving.

In botanical cures, folk medicines derived from the kernel have been used to break up blood clots and moisten the intestines. The pit contains amygdalin, emulsin, and fatty acids. Like plum, cherry, and other fruits of the genus *Prunus*, the Peach pit contains glycosides which break down into cyanide. The ancient Egyptians and Romans employed a method of capital punishment involving forced consumption of the ground kernel, "Death by Peach".

In planetary correspondence the tree is aligned with Venus, an association distinctly emphasized by each of the five senses. Its occult powers are therefore strongly amorous, aligned with operations of Allure, Love, Lust and Marriage. Other powers ascribed the Peach are Longevity, Beneficence, and Immortality. In part, by way of its existential goodness, it is also considered anti-demonic and used in various ways against pestilent spirits.

The Spirit-Retinue of Peach

Excellence, Perpetuity, Advocacy, Espousal, Mutuality, Pubescence, Titivation, Delight, Desire, Gratification, Triumphant Success, Buoyant Spirits, & Lubricious Arousal.

In China, the tree was regarded as having great power and wands of its wood were used for exorcism. Ancient processions of wizards are recorded bearing Peach wands, used to strike and chase evil spirits. Water was charmed by stirring it with Peach wands, and then used for sacred purposes, like washing the body as a purifier. Taoist sorcerers of antiquity included Peaches in their elixirs of immortality. One Chinese spell to prevent evil spirits from entering the home employed a sprig of Peach blossom affixed over the doorway or to the door itself. In Carlo Ginzburg's examination of archaic witchcraft rites *Ecstasies*, the author remarked on the use of peach wood Chinese festival of Ta No:

> A person clothed in red and black, wrapped in a bearskin, with four eyes of yellow metal, led 120 children between the ages of ten and twelve, with a red cap on their heads and a half-red, half black tunic. They shot hawthorn arrows from peachwood bows to expel the plagues of the old year from the walls of the imperial palace.

In China, the blossoms are a symbol of matrimony, and a distillation of the flowers is prized to ward off evil. In Japan as well as China, the peach was used to prevent the irruptive presence of devils. A Japanese charm against thunder was made by cutting a peach-stone into a triangular form on the ninth day of the ninth month, and wearing it in a three-cornered bag. In Thailand, various parts of the tree were smoldered, the smoke used as a strong demonifuge.

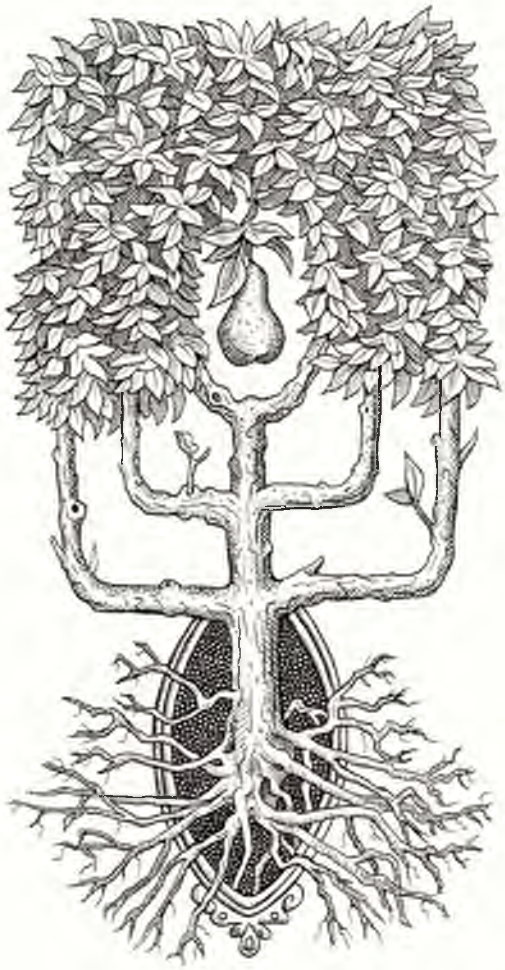
In North America, the witch-wigglers of the Ozarks often use a forked branch of green peach wood to locate subterranean water. At such times the dowser walked above a vein of water, the peachwood, held parallel to the ground, began to wiggle, finally pointing downward where the well should be dug. Ozark mountain-folk regard it as ill luck to burn peach trees.

PEAR

Pyrus spp.
Rosaceæ (Rose Family)

DEPENDING on species and variety, Pear trees grow from 3 to 20 meters in height. Its flowers are white and, as is manifest in all members of the Rose Family, five-petaled. Sterile Pear hybrids, bred for their flower display only, are found in the United States as street trees. Its origin of domestication in China and in the Caucasus. Archaeological evidence of human use of Pear as food as far back as the last Ice Age.

Pyrus, the genus of True Pears, contains 33 accepted species, and there are manifold cultivars, many of them ancient. The main pears of commerce are European Pear (*Pyrus communis*) and Asian Pear (*Pyrus pyrifolia*), though other lesser-known species are also edible. Reflecting the diversity inherent in the genus, the fruits of Pear species can vary in shape from the classically-known teardrop form, to shapes resembling the fruits of Apples or even Medlars, as with the Iberian Pear (*P. bourgaeana*).



Its action on the body is nutritive, stimulating and laxative. In medieval Europe, the roots of the Pear tree were a noted contraceptive. Cider made from pears is properly known as *perry*, and its centers of traditional production are France and England. The wood of the tree is valuable for carving as well as the aromatic smoke it produces when burnt for flavoring meat.

Among the celestial bodies, Pear manifests the power of, and is consecrated to, Venus. Its occult principles as empowering charms, spells and magical preparations are Love, Allure, Bewitchment, and Immortality. The tree was featured metaphorically in erotic literature, as its fruit is suggestive of erotic analogues of human flesh, whether uterine, phallic or intimating the sensuous curve of the buttocks.

> In considering particularly the different shapes, sizes, colors, flavors, and odors of the pear, who will not adore the wisdom of the creator. Pears are found round, long 'goderonnees' pointed, blunt, small, and large. Gold, silver, vermilion, and satin green are found among the pears. Sugar, honey, cinnamon, clove, flavor them. They smell of musk, amber, and chive. In short, so excellent are the fruits that an orchard would not be worth while in a place where pear trees do not thrive.
>
> OLIVIER DE SERRES
> *Le Theatre d'Agriculture*, 1608

In the Balkans, Pear wood is at times employed as a substitute for Dogwood to kindle the sacred need-fire. The tree provided one of several types of wood identified as as being used for sacrificial fires in ancient Greece.

Balkan traditions also regard the tree as sinister, its limbs being a frequent gathering-place for witches. During the height of the European witch trials, poisoning of Apple and Pear fruits were an occasional accusation against witches.

> "I depart now this life" von Ribbeck said.
> "I wish that a pear in my grave be laid".
> And after three days, from this mansard roofed hall,
> Squire von Ribbeck was carried out, 'neath a pall.
> All farmers and cottagers, solem-faced,
> Sang: "Jesus, in Thee my trust is placed",
> And the children lamented, with hearts like lead:
> "Who'll give us a pear, now that he is dead?"
>
> THEODOR FONTANE
> *Herr von Ribbeck auf Ribbeck im Havelland*, 1898

In Japan, the trees were esteemed for their power of dispelling evil. Pear trees were planted at the corners of land allotments—particularly those in the northeast, which were considered demonic portals—during the Edo period (1603–1868), in order to protect against ill luck and noxious influences. Likewise is found the old Circassian custom of planting a Pear tree to protect cattle, or to have them growing in the home as a Domicilary Genius.

The Spirit-Retinue of Pear

Elivenment, Pulchritude, Romance, Sophistication, Ripeness, Nourishment, Resuscitation, Stolid Vigilance, Steadfast Devotion, Restorative Breath, Impassioned Heart, Autumnal Glory, and Quiet Adjuration.

Pearly Everlasting

Anaphalis margaritacea
Asteraceæ (Sunflower Family)

A DIOECIOUS perennial growing to 1 meter, native to North America and widespread across the northern hemisphere. Thin, alternate leaves and white disk-shaped flowers are borne on tall, woolly stalks giving the plant a stately and iconic presentation. The plant dries quickly, retaining its shape, as well as a beguiling fragrance, hence its honored placement among plants called 'everlasting'. There are about 100 species of *Anaphalis*.

As reckoned by natural medicine, it is an expectorant, and vermifuge, and an excellent medicament for cough, bronchitis, and other sundry harangues of the pulmonarium. The juice or decoction, mixed with beer or wine, is used to eliminate parasites of the alimentum. A strong infusion of 40 grams of the flowers, in one liter of boiling water, will tonify the skin, or help clear it of ulcers, blights, or burns when added to a bath.

Its principal powers in enchantments are Exorcism, Consecration, Endurance, Strength, Longevity, and triumph in warfare; its planetary correspondence is with Mars. Across a broad spectrum of magical use, it is universally regarded as a powerful spirit, able to overcome infection and demonic influences. For strength in combat, Cheyenne warriors of Montana rubbed themselves and their horses with Pearly Everlasting before riding into battle. The Forest Potawotami used the flowering tops as a smudge to blind evil spirits and drive them from the house. Smoke from the aerial portions was also used to consecrate gifts to the gods.

PELARGONIUM

Pelargonium spp.

Geraniaceæ (Geranium Family Family)

A GENUS of 60 accepted species of perennials well known to floriculture but also common in the wild. Inflorescences are generally bunched forms of five-petaled flowers, with an array of colors ranging from white to red to purple. Many of the representative species have intensely fragrant leaves, often kidney-shaped, and are favorites of flower gardens due to their long blooimg seasons. Taxonomy is both complex and fluid: at the present time, a large number of potential species remain to be assessed. Many plants commonly referred to as 'Geraniums' are in fact Pelargoniums, such as 'Rose Geranium' (*Pelargonium graveolens*). The name Pelargonium is derived from the Greek *pelargos*, meaning stork, in reference to the distinctive long-beaked shape of the plant's seed pod.

The scent of the leaves and flowers make the plant a valuable addition to liqueurs, potpourri, and perfumed oils. Most of the plants in the genus convey the aspects of Venus, specifically those comprising allure, love, æsthetics and pleasant relations; its occult essence largely agrees with these principles, with the additional powers of cleansing in attendance.

In traditional plant magic, *P. luridum*, a scented species from South Africa, is used by young Zulu men as a love charm while courting. Another South African species known as Umckaloabo (*P. sidoides*), has a reputation as an antibacterial and is marketed outside the United States as a cold remedy; it may readily be grown in the garden, where it lends a distinctive presence with its sensuous gray leaves and dark maroon flowers.

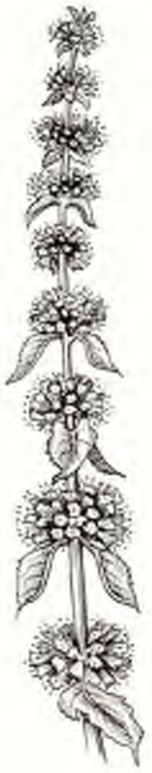
PENNYROYAL

Mentha pulegium

Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

THERE is a sense, when in the proximity of Pennyroyal, that one stands in the presence of the queen destroyer of the Mint family, a quality projected by its minty, almost pyrethrin-like scent. A cosmopolitan perennial growing to 60 cm, Pennyroyal has lilac-colored whorls of flowers and readily propagates asexually through rhizomes. It is readily recognized as kindred to the Mints, but lacks their friendly, sweet, and succulent qualities. It is found in gardens, but also in the wild.

This herb's attested pharmacological and toxicological properties are many, including action as a carminative, diaphoretic, abortifacient, and insecticide. Leaf infusions, representing a lower dose of the plant, are used to promote perspiration; stronger teas are used in colds, to treat obstructed menses, and as a refrigerant tea in fevers. The tincture has been employed as an abortifacient and, attesting to its assertive nature, can also be used topically to destroy lice. The essential oil is a vigorous hepatotoxic poison and should be avoided.



The plant is glorified in the planetary efflux of Venus, and of the goddess, its characteristics resonate with Venus Verticordia—the 'turner of hearts', who made chaste those who were lustful. Its occult powers are Protection from Maleficia, success in marriage, as well as being used as a love charm. Mirroring its medicial proclivities for expulsion and termination, it can also be used for exorcism.

Leaves of powdered Pennyroal, compounded with seeds of Anise, comprised an old Welsh remedy to check 'seminal weakness'.

In Morocco, Pennyroyal is a widespread suffumigant used against all evil. The plant contains great *baraka*, and is most virtuous if gathered before Midsummer.

An incense to drive away visions and phantasms appears in the 13th century grimoire *Liber Juratus* made from Pennyroyal, Peony, Mint and Castor Bean.

The Spirit-Retinue of Pennyroyal

Resistance, Aggression, Irruption, Alacrity, Mitgation, Staunchness, Counteraction, Assertive Influence, Unctuous Flirtation, Unruly Copulation, Thwarted Schemes, Harsh Medicament, and Virid Baptism.

PEONY

Paeonia spp.

Pæonaceæ (Peony Family)

THE genus *Paeonia* contains about 30 species of herbaceous perennials or shrubs found in temperate regions of Europe and Asia, with flowers of varying colors. Valued as a horticultural dandy in the cloistered beds of the garden, Peonies in the wild are hardy survivors of extreme conditions; the drought tolerant species *P. californica* is native to Southern California and Northern Mexico. It has been suggested that the enigmatic 'single-stemmed wormwood' so often prescribed in the formulae of *The Greek Magical Papyri* is in fact a type of Peony. In the ordering of the planetary powers, Peony is aligned both with the Sun and with Saturn.

In the medicine of ancient times, Dioscorides prescribed 15 seeds in wine against nightmares; this likely relates to the plant's established occult reputation as a frightener of demons. The herb has been employed for sciatica and epilepsy, as well as an old component of anti-asthmatic, cough suppressant elixirs. The power of Batipi, or *Paeonia brownii*, was invoked among some Native Americans to treat pulmonary afflictions. The root of the same was boiled into a syrup to treat consumption, kidney troubles, and nausea. Chemically, most species are poisonous, though with varying degrees of toxicosis in humans and animals. Notable phytotoxins include pæonoside, paeonolid, apigenine, caempherol, and quercitine derivatives. Ingestion of significant quantities of the seeds, flowers, or rhizomes can cause vomiting, nausea, cramps, and congestion of the guts. Some miscarriages by pregnant women have been reported.

> The root of Male-Piony, dryed, tied to the Neck, doth help the Incubus, which we call the Mare.
>
> WILLIAM COLES
>
> *The Art of Simpling, 1656*

Generally, the plant is accorded the planetary influences of the Sun. In ancient times, the root was considered a sovereign Solar talisman, and was carried on the person in this capacity. Magically, Peony had an ancient reputation for protection, particularly from unruly entities and storms. The flower was thought to especially protect farmers and their crops, as well as shepherds and their flocks. Like the Mandrake, it was considered dangerous to uproot a Peony, and similar magical precautions were sometimes taken. Some say Peony is best gathered at night; others go still further to recommend it be pulled from the ground with a trained dog, much in the old manner of exhuming the *Mandragora*, so as to avoid being cursed by the genius of the herb. The light of the full moon in this endeavor is auspicious.

The seeds are known in some magical traditions as Jumby Beans, and are used to curse, ignite quarreling, or unleash chaos and confusion. These same seeds were elsewhere used in charms to boss and frighten noxious spirits. In England, an old Sussex charm to chase disease-causing demons away from babies utilizes a string of beads carved from the roots of Peony, hung about the neck of the infant to be warded. Certain archaic magical incense formulae compounded for exorcism were made from a mixture of Peony, Calamus, Mint, and Castor.

Peony had ancient repute as a talisman to control the weather, used to avert or command tempests. In Germany, the *Pfingstl*, the Whitsuntide tree-spirit of Bavaria, was clad head to toe in leaves and flowers, a significant portion of which were Peonies.

PERICÓN

Tagetes lucida

Asteraceæ (Sunflower Family)

PERICÓN is a sacred Mexican Marigold, a handsome perennial to 1 meter in height, with composite flowers of a deep golden hue. It is easily grown in the garden and provides ethnobotanical power to cuisine, perfumery, magical and religious use. Some conjecture that Pericón was the ancient Aztec sacrament *Yauhtli*, used in aphrodisiac and clarivoyant capacities, as well as given to captives prior to human sacrifice. The plant's fragrance, emanating chiefly from its leaves, is 'green', anise-like, piercing & refreshing.

Its medicinal actions are emetic, stimulant, and insecticide. Often used as a tea, the herb was employed in Mexican folk medicine for ailments of the lung, lower bowel, and stomach. Pericón is used as a culinary herb in a similar capacity to Tarragon, and is rich in medicinal compounds including coumarins, estragol, chavicol, saponins, tannins, l-inositol, cyanogenic glycosides, and tannic acid. As a tea or fragrant wash, it is best extracted by infusion of dried leaves and flowers parts in hot water; it was once a component of the sacred Cacao drinks of the Aztecs.

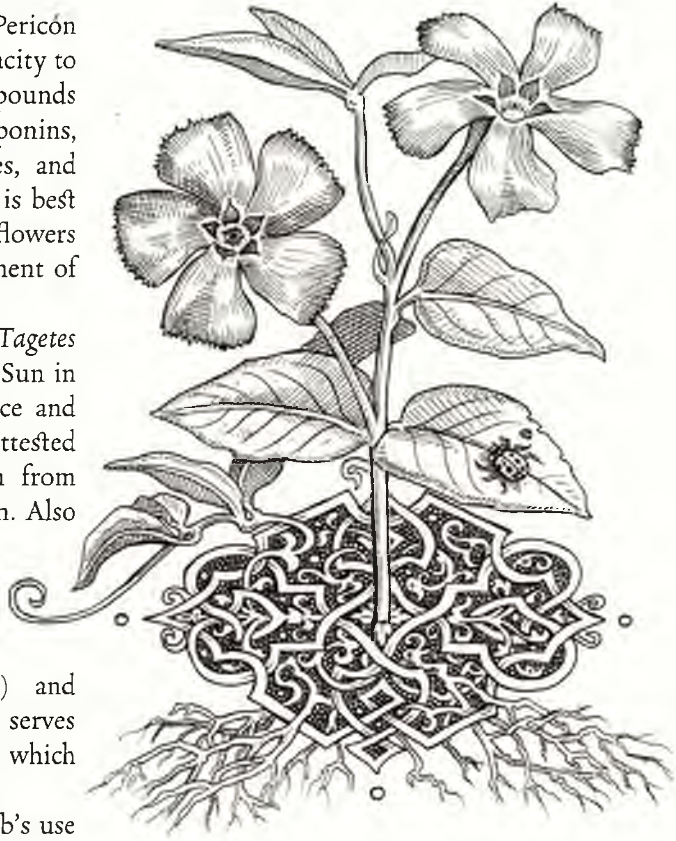
As with many flowers of the genus *Tagetes* or True Marigolds, it is aligned with the Sun in the doctrines of planetary correspondence and astrological magic. Its magical uses, as attested through time, are Exorcism, Protection from Noxious Spirits, Healing, and Divination. Also reckoned as a *Flor de Muerto* (Flower of the Dead), it possesses a strong funerary power and resonance with the dead. In Aztec cosmology, it is associated with Cihualcoatl-Quiatzli (Woman Serpent) and Tlaloc, god of Rain. In talismanic uses, it serves well in the form of a dried flower bundle, which retains some of its aromatic character.

Codex Badianus of 1552 reports the herb's use as a potion to cure those who have been struck by lightning. Smeared on the chest, it also formed part of a complex charm for safely crossing a river. The Huichol Indians of Mexico prize Pericón, in combination with Coyote Tobacco (*Nicotiana rustica*) as an enlivening ceremonial smoke.

PERIWINKLE

Vinca minor: Lesser Periwinkle
Vinca major: Greater Periwinkle
Apocyanaceæ (Dogbane Family)

PERIWINKLE is a low-growing, mounding evergreen vine preferring shady woods and streambanks, showing a preference of growing amid Oaks and Hornbeams, having glossy dark green leaves and pale blue flowers. Originally a European plant, Periwinkle has escaped gardens and become a major weed in some areas of North America. In California it is frequently observed in the understory of Redwood biome, and a frequent target of invasive plant interdiction. Among its historical folk-identifiers are the evocative common names Hundred-Eyes, Joy-of-the-Ground, Flower of Death, and Sorcerer's Violet.



In folk medicine, Periwinkle is a vulenary and reputed aphrodisiac; used to treat throat and mouth ulcers, diptheria, and diabetes, as well as afflictions of the scalp and dermis. In the human body, the plant is philosophically aligned with the blood, and the legion vinca alkaloids derived from the plant are used to treat blood disorders, as well as cancer and degenerative neurological diseases.

Occult correspondences for Periwinkle are Allure, Fertility, Love and Death. As aligned with classic planetary attributes, it partakes in aspects of Venus and the Moon, a liminal zone which is frequently the dominion of witchcraft. Owing to the plant's propensity for cultural adaptation and thriving in dark conditions, as well as its characteristic of sexual beguilement, it is aligned with the Hebrew daimonic form Lilith, mother of earth-dwelling demons, and a frequent patroness of witches.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF PERIWINKLE

Captivation, Persuasion, Promiscuity, Commixtion, Attachment, Infiltration, Subterfuge, Haunting, Sussurus, Shade, Fecundity, Proliferation, & Spectral Countenance.

In the European magical flora, Periwinkle was one of the chief flowers for ensuring conjugal love; in antiquity, the plant was gathered in chasteness, or by a virgin. Periwinkle was also worn in a garter as a charm for fertility. A well-known medieval love powder was compounded of equal parts leaves of Periwinkle, Cinquefoil, and Vervain. Two pinches of this powder were added to wine, then left to steep for 12 hours, then strained before serving.

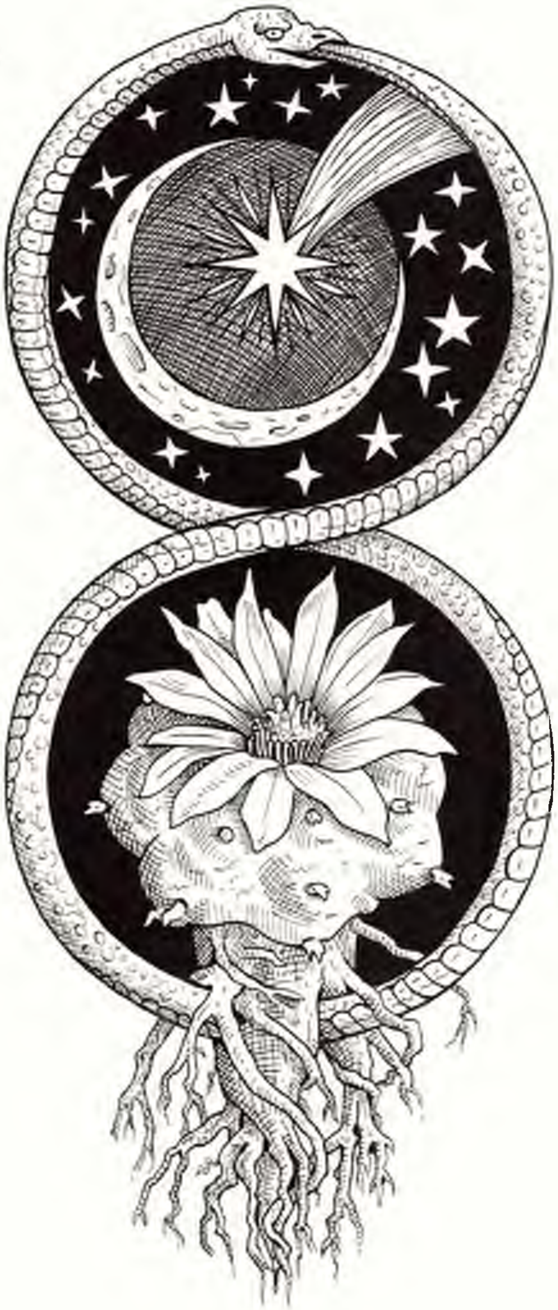
Periwinkle also has a long tradition of death-associations. In Italy, V. *minor* was wrapped as a garland around those about to be executed, hence the name *fiore de morte*. As an herb of Death, Periwinkle also appears in French and British folkore. Funerary and wedding usages for the plant are especially well represented in Slavic traditions, particular Poland and Ukraine. In Wales, foul luck befell those who plucked Periwinkle from a grave.

PEYOTE

Lophophora williamsii
Cactaceæ (Cactus Family)

A SQUAT, slow-growing, round cactus populating the Rio Grande Valley of Texas and northern Mexico, seldom exceeding 7 cm in height and 18 cm in diameter. It is gray-green in color, bearing blossoms of white to pale pink, and has an obese taproot. The Nahuatl word *peyotl* derives from a stem meaning 'to glimmer or glow.'

It is known as a Native American medicine and visionary power plant, and associated with the psychoactive alkaloid mescaline. In the wild, its numbers are greatly reduced, its habitat degraded by poachers, thrill seekers and plant collectors. Because of this, the plant is listed as endangered, and as such is protected. Given that part of its preferred habitat is in Texas, the protection afforded it would naturally include firearms. Indeed, when I was a child, it was well known that some ranchers would shoot at 'long-hairs' who wandered into the scrub looking to filch cactus. Although the plant is a federally scheduled controlled substance in the United States, it is solely legal for use by the Native American Church.



The Peyote cult is primeval, with archaeological evidence pointing to an early date of 3780 BCE. The materials were peyote buttons discovered in a Texas cave and were not only in a condition sufficient for radiocarbon dating, but, astoundingly, still had sufficient mescaline alkaloids preserved for identification through thin-layer chromatography and gas chromatography-mass spectrometry.

The cactus corresponds with the attributes of Sun and Moon, both as distinct celestial entities, and as a united entity during the phenomenon of eclipse. Its spirit powers are Purification, Meditation, Illumination, Wisdom, and Visions. In addition to its use as a visionary sacrament, and a means of communion with spirits, it is also used in native medicine to treat fevers, snakebite, rheumatism, and as a poultice for fractures and open wounds. As a Visionary, it is associated with healing and community: the cactus brings what is needed, even if those who approach it are not fully aware of the subtle particulars of the need.

The Spirit-Retinue of Peyote

Confrontation, Confession, Vulnerability, Empathy, Restoration, Wholesomeness, Hylozoism, Noctilucence, Exhortation, Virtuous Wayfaring, Righteous Action, and *Divine Catharsis.*

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Where Wood Meets Flesh

REFLECTIONS ON THE WISDOM OF THE DENDRITES

PRIMEVAL Christianity was marked by a plenteous diversity of sects: far from being a unified cult, the faith in its early centuries was a patchwork of mystical communities, each reflecting a different vision of the power and legacy of Christ. Many of these sects served as repositoria of disparate strands of pre-Christian magic and produced their own unique bodies of esoteric writings. Accordingly, some of these rituals and traditions more often resembled sorcery than the religious rites of the Church today.

One early visionary society was that of the Desert Hermits, which began in Egypt, and radiated outward through the Levant, producing some of Christianity's most inspired mystical writings and ascetic practices. Following on the traditions of earlier desert mystics, they forsook the cities: these chosen of Christ had heard his savage voice murmur from the hollow places of the wilderness, and they heeded the call of their god. Going forth to abide in the desert as anchorites—a community of hermits in exile—they did battles with demons, received the counsel of angels, and pushed the limits of the body, spirit and ego to hitherto unknown extremes.

Each chose his own wilderness habitation, a primitive and unadorned cell wherein God was the sole focus of rustic contemplation and worship. Some chose caves, others lived under rocks or in subterranean Egyptian tombs and did battle with demons; in many ways these shrines were reminiscent of the Greek cults of the nymphs, which were concentrated in similar wild loci of power. In time, the Desert Hermits became thickly bearded and wild-looking, having assumed many of the physical attributes of the lonely places.

Among these men of wild solitude were the Dendrites, those peculiar hermits who ascended to the tops of trees, there to dwell without moving for years at a time, for the glory of God. Permanently suspended between Earth and Heaven, their fellow cenobites raised food and other necessities to them in baskets on ropes. Surviving contemporary images of the Dendrites frequently portray bearded male heads emerging from the crowns of trees, displaying a disturbing ambiguity dwelling at the boundary between the human and the vegetal.

Others among these rude hermits, such as David and Adolas, attained mystical solace by confining themselves inside the trunks of hollow trees. Writing of the ascetic Paul of Thebes, St. Jerome reported that "the palm tree of which I have spoken provided him with all that was necessary for food and clothing." Saint Maron dwelt eleven long years inside a hollow log lined with thorns.

In reading the ancient descriptions of these desert ascetics, one is struck by their resemblance to the medieval European figure of the Wild Man or Woodwose, the foreſt-dweller whose alarming and hirsute form was often pictured clothed in leaves and ſtraw and wielding a club. Frescoes and manuscripts depicting the Dendrites also atteſt to this enigmatic embodiment of 'wildness'.

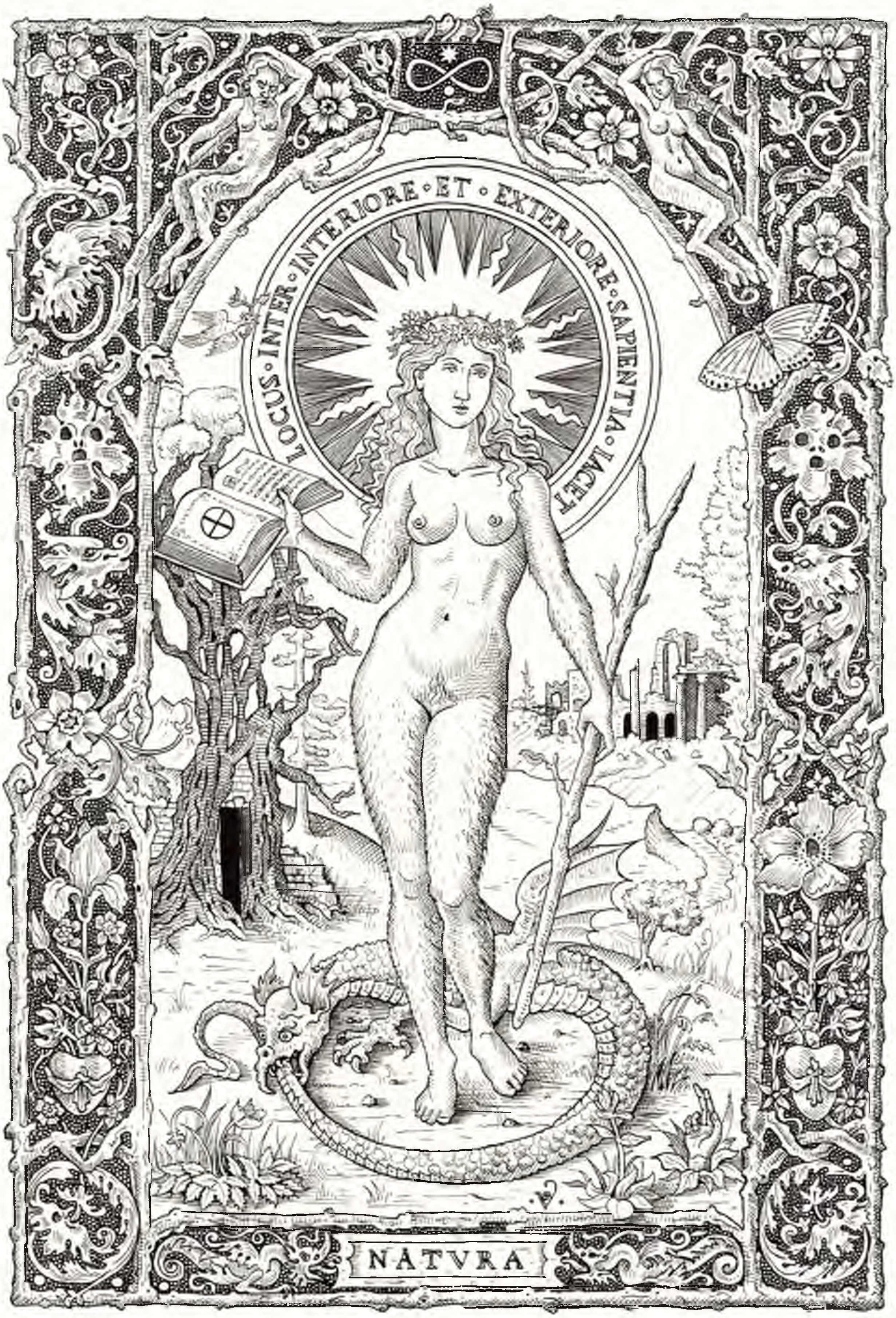
Although the accounts of these hermits—some of whom later became saints—ſtress that their ſtation was a sacrifice of humility for God, their eremitic practices can also be viewed in a more magical manner: through the act of undertaking hermitage, the divine virtue of Wildness, particularly arboreal consciousness and wisdom, was embodied. A Dendrite may have dedicated his hermitage to Chriſt, but the magical essence of the Tree, his hoſt, cannot have been ignored, and would have been crucial to both visionary power and *ascesis*: the ſtrength and offerings of the branches; its privileged view, offering a viſta from the heights; the manner in which its bark and leaves offered shelter or 'clothed' the hermit; the phytomorphic mirroring of the celeſtial spheres in the roots, leaves, and branches. This deified sylvan underſtanding is explicit in the depictions of the dendrites who, with the tree, seem unified with it in a myſtical symbiosis. Such men, through their devotional fervor and arboreal positions, certainly had a precise underſtanding of Jesus' words: *I am the vine, ye are the branches.*

In the early 1990s my deepening animism led me increasingly into the solitude of the wilderness. In particular, as a ſtudent of esoteric plant knowledge, I sought the shaded myſtery of each tree and herb, not only in the obscure passages of ancient texts, but also amid the wild places of the lands wherein I walked. The process, involving both the visceral phytorealms and the nuances of magical contemplation, gave rise to its own embodied pedagogy: when I entreated the wilderness, I learned not only how to receive the answers given in reply, but also how to formulate the proper entreaty to begin with.

Amid this gradual withdrawal into magical hermitage, hidden pathways opened before me into the great barrens of the earth, where I learned the ways of the wold, and yes, at times, dwelt in trees. Much of this time I spent exploring the alpine wilderness of Trinity County, California, an area particularly rich in plant diversity and geological splendor. There, in solitude, I became as an apprentice of the woodwoses, a book whose pages were impressed with floral inks, wind, and moonlight. There, I was also privileged to live, for a time, amid those I call the *Bygones*.

Having rejected all else, these people had come here decades before and fashioned their homes from only that which the land provided, eschewing all forms of 'civilization.' Here were men and women colored as the very mantle of the earth – as soil and leaves, as wood and ſtone. Their visages and movements were contiguous with the land, to such a degree that, even in relatively close proximity, only the keenly discerning would know they were looking at people, and not a meadow or a ravine. Though it had long been my practice to avoid cities, inſtead spending great lengths of time alone in the woods, being in the presence of such wild people provoked feelings of deep humility, and the realization that in my years of academic matriculation I had missed out on another education entirely: the embodied knowledge of wilderness subsiſtence.

Deer were hunted for hides and meat, as were birds, and an extensive planted orchard weathered the harsh California droughts to provide abundant fruit. A meticulously curated medicine garden served as their living pharmacy. But the foundation of the Bygones' diet was the acorn, provided by the local Garry Oak (*Quercus garryana*) and California Black Oak (*Quercus kellogii*). Each morning, during my time among them, we would all rise early to enjoin the work of shelling and pounding acorns for the suſtenance of all. The work would no doubt be considered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monotonous and repetitive to most city dwellers, but having worked in several factories, I found the work comparatively pleasant. Making the best of the time, these hours of labor were used for storytelling, conveying news, or singing songs.

In appearance, these hardy souls evoked the ancient depictions of the Dendrites of early Christianity: bearded, dressed in skins and robes, and possessed of a wizened phenology which blurred the bounds of flesh and wood. Whether a noble face was seen to emerge from a leafy branch-terminus, or merely sported a foliate crown, was often impossible to tell: the human form, as we know, may be extrapolated to the arboreal, its trunk producing arms as branches like Daphne of old. In temperament, they presented a marked difference from all I knew: the limbic system, long suppressed in urban areas in favor of the cerebral cortex, was here an esteemed equal, but out of necessity rather than affect. One could speak poetic prophecy one instant, and in the next scramble to the top of a seventy-foot tree. Yet most striking among the Bygones' wild attributes was their unambiguously mystical resonance with the Oak, that tree which served as their daily bread, much as the body of Christ served those once devoted to him. Fed on the wisdom of the great tree, they had become its children, and the priests and priestesses of its mystery-cult.

PINE

Pinus spp.

Pinaceæ (Pine Family)

PINE is a tall, fast-growing softwood conifer characterized by its scaly bark, evergreen needles, and cones, some of which produce edible nuts. It is also known for its aromatic resin, or pitch. The genus *Pinus* contains 125 species of considerable morphological diversity, and its native range is the northern hemisphere, ranging from tropical zones to the subarctic, and tolerating both humid and arid climates.

The needles, resin, twigs and wood-knots are valued in folk medicine. Pine is valued by several North American Indian societies for the treatment of lung disorders, as well as rheumatism and ulcers. In German folk medicine, the highest shoot of a Pine tree was taken as a preventative against gout. Immature green needles may be steeped in boiling water for a pleasing, aromatic tea. The scales and plates of ancient leather armor were hardened with pine pitch.

In celestial philosophy, the tree is of dual planetary correspondence, allied both with the Sun and with Saturn, two properties serving to balance its overall character. With the Solar affinity the Tree expresses its strong qualities as provender and immediate guardian of bodily health, as well as its kinship with fire; its Saturnian affect reflects and its stalwart longevity and sterilizing activity against noxious influence. As expressed in magic and ceremony, its occult properties are Healing, Longevity, Protection, Illumination, Ward Against Noxious Spirits, Clarivoyance, Justice, Lust, and Inspiration.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF PINE

Provision, Reliability, Versatility, Probity, Alliance,
Penetralia, Refuge, Godship, Endurance,
Valor, Principled Cure, Thriving
Vitality, and Quiet
Rapture.

In Greece, resin of Maritime Pine (*P. pinaster*) and Aleppo Pine (*P. halepensis*) is used to line wine barrels, lending a unique pinene and flavonoid-rich flavor profile to the celebrated *retsina* (Ρετσίνα) wines. Cones were also sometimes added to the barrels to infuse the wine with their aromatic qualities. The ancient Thyrsus, or sacred Wand of Dionysus, was a Fennel stalk topped with a Pinecone.

White Pine is the wood specified for the floor of Abraham the Jew's temple oratory by the magician Abramelin, as mentioned in the 1458 grimoire *The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage*. In Germany, boughs of Pine were hung on stable doors to prevent evil spirits from harassing livestock. In Russian folk magic, Pine rods are used to located subterranean deposits of lead and tin, two metals the tree is considered sensitive to. In North America, the indigenous Kawaiisu of California hung the discarded cradles of male children in the boughs of the Ponderosa Pine (*P. ponderosa*), so the child would grow strong in time, like the tree.

Pine resin, whose aromatic properties vary by species and means of preparation, is particularly well respresented in magic and ceremony. The Chinese fumigated their houses with Pine to expel mischevous and intrusive entities. In modern Egypt, fumigations of Pine resin (*fasukh*) are used to combat spirits of envy. In Native American traditions, smoldering Pine resin is particularly valued for purification rites, and to fumigate the body and clothing following a funeral, or after seeing a ghost. This is particularly true of Piñon (*P. edulis*), though the pitch of other species such as Limber Pine (*P. flexilis*) and Eastern White Pine (*P. strobus*). In Mexico, offertory incense was made by the Lacondón Maya from the resin of the Smooth-barked Mexican Pine (*P. psuedostrobus*).

In ancient Greece the faithful regarded Pine as sacred to Poseidon, Dionysos, and Zeus, and the tree was also an emblem of virginity. In ancient Roman religion, the Pine was typically associated with Sylvanus, and branches or cones of the tree frequently accompanied depictions of the arboreal god. Diana was crowned with a chaplet of Pine.

An ancient story relates that Adam, first or mortal men, as he was dying sent his son Seth unto Paradise to fetch fruit from the Tree of Life so that he might be healed and attain immortality. The angel standing guard over Paradise refused, and instead gave Seth three kernels. From these grew the Cypress, the Cedar, and the Pine trees, springing from the mouth of Adam's corpse.

PIÑON PINE

Pinus spp.

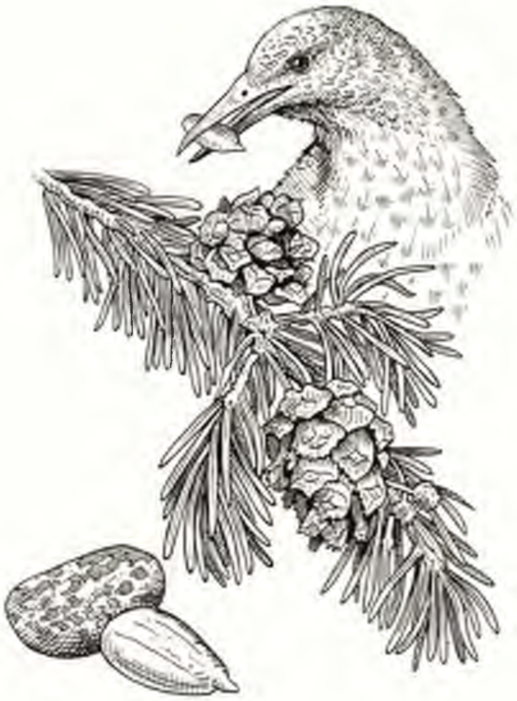
Pinaceæ (Pine Family)

PIÑON, or Pinyon, is a small Pine native to the United States, principally inhabiting the Mountain West. Botanically, the tree in question is often accounted in the literature as *Pinus edulis*, the Colorado Pinyon, though this is but one of a broader group ecompassing 10–15 species. Populations of the Piñon Pine group dwell chiefly in the the Four Corners states, but also in parts of California and Texas.

The parts used are the wood, needles, resin, pollen and edible nut. As a medicinal or therapeutic, the needles of Piñon are diuretic, and its pitch is expectorant; both have been burned for a smoke used to treat colds and respiratory complaints. The nut-kernel, being a traditional food staple of wildlife and human alike, is warming and nutritive, a restorative for the dilapidated. The Ramah Navajo employ a decoction of the wood or needles as a ceremonial emetic, and the resin has been used topically for superficial wounds and maladies of the skin. The powdered gum, mixed with sugar and encharmed with prayer, is a traditional Spanish American remedy for boils, used in New Mexico.

Its powers in ceremony are Purification, Protection, & Illumination, though it also possesses a strong oblative principle, and is a natural adjunct to healing. As manifesting the resonances of the classical planets, it is principally a tree of the Sun, both in the scope of its occult power and its Jupiter, particularly when the nut is considered.

Traditional magical usages of the tree are dominated by Native American ceremonies, with the aromatic resin serving as the most commonly used part of the tree, burnt as a valued purifying incense. This wholesome smoke is sacred to both the Hopi and Navajo as a purification medicine following deaths and funerary rites, and to suffumigate clothes and other objects to prevent contamination. Ceremonial Navajo wands were sometimes crafted of Piñon branches, sometimes taken from a lightning struck tree.



Piñon resin was also applied topically for protection. The Tewa smeared the pitch on the forehead, especially when going outside the home, as a protection against malefic sorcery. Among the Zuñi, who prize its resin as a ceremonial suffumigant, the Piñon is known as *He'sho*.

The Spirit-Retinue of Piñon

Sacrality, Remediation, Disinfection, Ascendancy,
Circulation, Majesty, Restoration, Brisk
Awakening, Rich Provision, Holy
Endeavor, Perfumed Prayers,
Impenetrable Shields,
and Purged
Maladies.

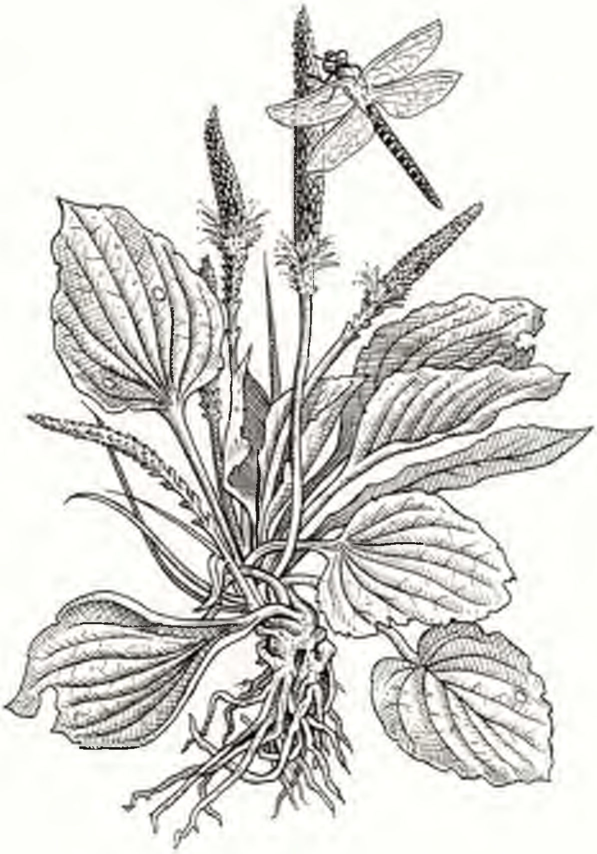
Much of my own time spent among Piñons has been with the populations of the Sawatch mountain range of Colorado, as well as those of the Sangre de Cristo in New Mexico, where the tree cohabits with various species of native desert Junipers. To walk among them in silence is to partake of an otherworldly nobility unlike any other tree or woodland. Though the tree's characteristic aroma is famously known from its smoldered resin, it may be profoundly experienced purely through the warming fires of the Sun, rather than those kindled in the thurible. With the rising of the Sun, and as the day warms, the trees begin to release their fragrance into the air. This intensifies over the course of the day, to the point that the trees' perfume suffuses first the nose, then the head, then the entirety of body and spirit. This state, like unto a kind of intoxicating ecstasy, moves through several aromatic phases according to temperature and wind, and allows a distinct meditative pathway to appreciation of the tree.

PLANTAIN

Plantago spp.
Plantaginacæ (Plantain Family)

RIBWORT or Plantain is an ubiquitous herb of cosmopolitan distribution, conspicuous by its prostrate habit and parallel-veined leaves. Its leaf shape is ovate, as in *Plantago major* or lanceolate, as in *P. lanceolata*. The rosetted leaves give rise to a stalk tipped with a brown, spikelike inflorescence having tiny white blossoms. There are just over 150 species of *Plantago* worldwide, with 19 found within in the United States. The herb's name 'Plantain' implies no relation to the tropical fruit of the same name, being the Savory Banana, a member of the botanical Musaceæ and an important food crop.

The plant is of ancient medicinal repute and is a common includion in old herbals and *materia medica*. Its therapeutic principles are anti-inflammatory, vulenary, expectorant, antimicrobial, nervine, and antihemmoragic specific to the respiratory and gastrointestinal tract. Species of *Plantago* are renowned worldwide for skin complications, including cuts, bruises, insect stings, and burns; this medicament is used in the form of a poultice or salve. Plantain may be applied directly to cuts, even severe ones, as one of the best rapid-healing bandages provided by Nature. Numerous folk healers have prescribed a tea from the plant for internal ulcerations, tumors and cancers. An infusion of an ounce of the fresh herb in a pint of boiling water will well serve this end. Leaves soaked a few brief moments in boiling water, then laid on the skin, will alleviate



the pains of swollen joints and sprains. Plantain may also be used for conjunctivitis.

The plant also had a strong reputation as a Theriac. In folk medicine, the juice of the leaves has been used successfully to cure the bite of the rattlesnake. Strong root and leaf decoctions have been a valued treatment of the chills, in a dose of 160 ml, taken three times per day. For bowel complaints in children, the green seeds and stems may be boiled in milk and given in the same dose as the above decoction. Disoscorides reported the use of plaintain as an amulet against scrofulous swellings. Ribwort is high in minerals, enzymes, and ascorbic acid; also present is mucilage, tannins, and flavonoids. Leaves should be collected in early spring.

The Spirit-Retinue of Plantain

Courage, Tranquility, Sedulity, Sustentation, Composure, Reservation, De-escalation, Silent Strength, Soothing Embraces, Venerable Receipts, Rustic Larders, Entrenched Defenses, and Perpetual Remedy.

*

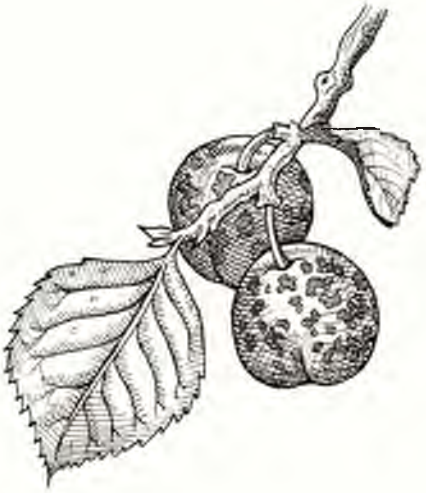
In classical correspondence the plant is governed by the Sun and Mars. Magically, it is used in operations to secure Success in Gambling, Summonning, and Dispelling Nightmares. Some species of *Plantago* are the source of Psyllium Seed, which, may be used with efficacy in magical operations of coercion. In one spell of antiquity, the seeds of Psyllium and Flax were burned as a fumigant in order to see future events.

Known as Waybread, it was one of the Nine Sacred Herbs of the Anglo Saxons. According to the *Charm of the Nine Herbs*, Plantain could resist the trampling of bulls' hooves, the grinding of chariot wheels, and to "withstand the venom that flies through the air and the loathed things that through the land rove." It is traditionally gathered for protection from fairies on Midsummer Eve (June 23), along with St. Johns Wort, Corn Marigold, Mugwort, Plantain, Dwarf Elder, Ivy, Vervain, and Orpins.

> If a person, man or woman, eats or drinks a love enchantment, then plantain juice, with or without water, should be given to him to drink. Later, he should take some strong drink, and he will be purged inside and be relieved.
>
> HILDEGARD OF BINGEN
> *Physica*, 1158

Owing to its knack for rendering the most noxious venoms less harmful, the herb may also be used for particularly difficult cases of exorcism. A bunch of leaves placed under the pillow will protect noxious spirits of the night.

CORRESPONDENCES
Powers: Protection and Healing.
Element: Earth.
Planet: The Sun and Mars.
Domain: Roads and Pathways.
Virtue: Fortitude.
Star: Arcturus (α Boötis).
Body Part: Skin.
Therapeutic: Stabilization.
Affliction: Flat Affect.
Embodied State: Homeostasis.
Emblem: An armored warrior bearing a vessel of water, extinguishing a wildfire.



PLUM

Prunus domestica
Rosaceæ (Rose Family)

PLUM is a deciduous tree to 10 meters in height—though often pruned lower for fruit production—displaying white flowers in the springtime. Some trees produce thorns, others do not. Its esculent, fleshy fruit encloses a hard kernel, giving rise to the name 'stone fruit' which Plum shares with other kindred trees such as Cherry, Peach and Apricot. The glorious procession of Plum varieties offers fruit with nearly every color in the rainbow, with flavors and textures equally diverse. Some are pink, others golden, some deep purple to black, and others are of an impossible sky blue. In selecting variety to grow, one must account for the local climate, and the number of cold days in winter, in order to produce a good crop. Also, certain varieties will not set fruit unless there is different plum variety growing nearby to pollinate it. Species of *Prunus* are unabashedly promiscuous and freely hybridize, and one may often find wild and domesticated plums commingled, woven in thickets and producing the strangest of fruits. The same is true of Cherry, Blackthorn and other species not usually considered plums.

Plum is a tree of Venus, and its occult properties are Allure, Summoning, Longevity and Malevolence. In folk medicine, the fruits are nutritive and laxative; in German folklore, the first three blossoms of a Plum tree were eaten in spring as a sovereign preventative of heartburn in the coming year.

The Spirit-Retinue of Plum

Convocation, Exhilaration, Eudemonia, Revival, Temptation, Luster, Bounty, Lubricity, Fondness, Naughtiness, Perfumed Vitality, Bucolic Wisdom, and Fleshly Splendor.

In North America, the Pawnee regarded the Plum as a symbol of bounty. In the Ozarks, there are some traditions of Plum branches being used to dowse for water, as with the Peach (*P. persica*). The wood is dense and hard, and is excellent for carving totems and effigies.

> Boughs of plum trees on the doors keep witches away in some parts of Europe.
>
> M. A. JAGENDORF
> *Folk Wines, 1963*

Closely related to Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), Plum exhibits some demonic resonance with this spiny tree, often being aligned in lore with witchcraft and malevolent spirits. In Slavonian Gypsy lore, witches are thought to assemble in groves of Plum just after sunset. Some types of Plum Tree, such as the Bird-Cherry (*Prunus padus*) are thought to be the natural plant-allies of ill-willed sorcerers. In other traditions, the stones of plum-fruits imprison the tormented souls of those who have committed suicide.

At the time of ripening, a wondrous Venusian quality gathers about the Plum; her fruit swells, engorged with juice, sweet pulp, nectareous balsams and tart acids, the summer air is thick with delicious aromas. Those fruits which soften and drop of their own accord are quickly fermented to a natural wine by the sun and the native yeasts which naturally dwell amongst the branches. Prized by birds, these corrupted fruits on their own accord yield an alcohol content sufficient to intoxicate to the point of impaired flight and song.

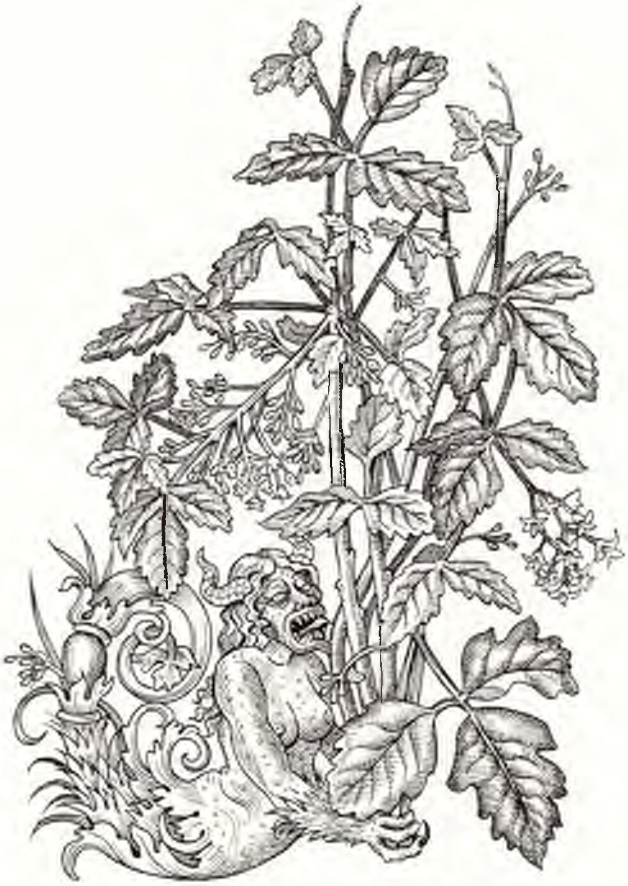
These beguiling qualities lead us to consider *slivovitz,* the traditional Plum brandy distilled in many Slavic countries including Poland (Śliwowica), Bulgaria (Slivova), Serbia (Šljivovica), as well as Ukraine, Bosnia, Croatia, Czechia and others. In the Visegrád countries it is known as *slivovica.* The enthusiastic devotion to home-distilled *slivovitz* is something akin to a folk religion, with distillers often claiming a proprietary recipe, and asserting that it is the best. The exemplary elixir should possess a transcendent taste, evoking both flowers and fruit, as well as an essence one may only describe as 'vitality', immediately lifting the spirits. As a general observation, commercial *slivovitz* cannot remotely be compared to these lovingly crafted Plum spirits, as it seems that with mass-production methods, the essence of the tree wholly departs. Although *slivovitz* is classically distilled from damson plums, though I have also made excellent plum brandies from Greengages and Mirabelles.

POISON OAK

Toxicodendron diversilobum

Anacardiaceæ (Cashew Family)

AN attractive deciduous shrub characterized by oak-like leaves arranged in clusters of three, native to the Western United States and growing in coniferous forest and chaparral. It is universally demonized for its skin-irriating principle urushiol, $(CH_2)_{14}CH_3$, active in minute amounts. Aggressive and opportunistic, in the biome defined by Redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*) Poison Oak is shrubby and freely competes with ferns; in deep-shaded forest it can assume the form of a liana. Leaf morphology can vary greatly from plant to plant, with lobes explicit or nearly absent, but the three-leaf arrangement is consistent. Inconspicuous cream-colored flowers eventually give way to berry clusters. Some of the most beautiful autumn color along the West Coast of North America comes not from stately trees, but from this reviled, scrubby upstart, whose turning leaves radiate a palette of pink, purple, magenta, and electric orange.


Toxicodendron diversilobum

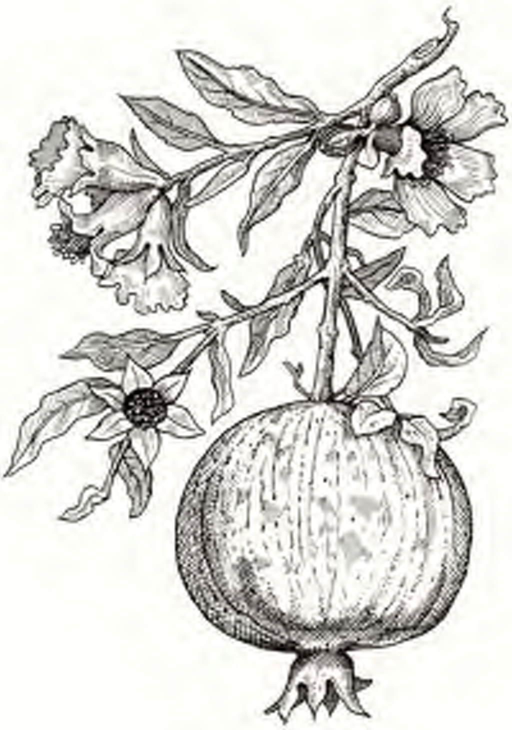
When happy and flourishing in a sunny, open area, thickets of Poison Oak can reach a formidable size, growing much in the entangled manner of Blackberry, with which it sometimes cohabits. In the summer, when urushiol concentration in the leaves is particularly strong, one need not even touch the plant to contract dermatitis; a strong wind through these natural hedges is sufficient to mist passers-by with inflammatory microdroplets. This fact has not gone unnoticed by certain military intelligence agencies; my contacts in various armies have reported active, or mothballed weaponization programs for Poison Oak and its relative Poison Ivy. These offensive potentials, as expressed in the bloody Field of Mars, directly correspond to the plant's spiritual virtues of defense, confrontation, and disruption.

Bearing the brunt of humanity's ire, total extermination of Poison Oak is a common civilizing tactic, with industrial herbicides such as Triclopyr at the vanguard of this total war. Manual removal is also employed, although tricky and always carrying significant risk: even brushing against dormant stems or trunks in wintertime may outrage the skin; burning dead plant material only aerosolizes its inflammatory principles, generating a truly horrific fume capable of creating lesions in the respiratory tract. In my days as an estate gardener, on several occasions my crew encountered Poison Oak using Redwood as a natural trellis, the individual plants growing up to 20 meters in height, with woody trunks measuring 15 cm in diameter. The protocol for old vines found on redwoods was to cut the thick vine trunk at the base with a chainsaw, discarding the entire saw blade after use rather than attempting cleaning. Dead wood can remain toxic for years and continue to create severe dermatitis and rashes on the skin of those who touch it. On my own property, instead of eradication, wild stands of Poison Oak have been managed—albeit gingerly—due to the abundance of food, shelter and habitat they provide for birds and other wildlife, as well as its necessitous place in the community of wild plants. Indeed, both physically, and in the realm of natural magic, Toxicodendron makes a fine hedge, but one that requires certain sacrifices of the verderer.

The skin reaction can range from single blisters to massive lesions that split the skin like an over-ripe tomato, giving rise to the horrific 'Four S's: scratching, sepsis, scabbing, and scarring. Medical treatments for severe reactions focus on prescription corticosteroids; folk remedies abound, with very mixed results. Though both can traumatize the skin, there does seem to be a difference between exposure to leaves and the wood, the latter giving rise in its healing stages to pachyderm-like 'elephant skin' which is discolored, dry and desiccated.

CORRESPONDENCES

Essence: Contagion.
Magical Powers: Warfare, Harassment, and Defense.
Planet: Mars.
Element: Fire.
Deific Forms: Mars, Nemesis.
Alchemical Concept: Deflagration.
Body Part: Skin.
Atavistic Power: Fight or Flight Response.
Chemical Virtues: Urushiol.
Biochemical Dominion: Catecholamine.
Plant Allies: Redwood, Nettle, Elder, Manzanita, Blackberry.
Emblem: A green imp holding a torch, standing before a dry haystack.



POMEGRANATE

Punica granatum
Lythraceæ (Loosestrife Family)

A SMALL tree or shrub with red or orange flowers, and a large swollen berry, whose many seeds are sheathed by juice-bearing arils. It grows to 10 meters in height, though most cultivated varieties are shorter, and has been cultivated by millennia, giving rise to an astounding number of cultivars, with a great diversity of sizes, colors, flowers and fruit characteristics. Its center of biodiversity and likely emergence is Iran and Northern India, but it is now grown worldwide, thriving in warm, arid zones. A tree with an ancient intimacy with Homo sapiens, it has been in cultivation for five millennia, and perhaps longer than seven.

Formerly classed in its own plant family (Punicaceæ), it has recently been re-assigned to the Loosestrife family via phylogenetic evidence. The genus *Punica* is tiny, possessing only two species, *Punica granatum*, and the Socotran Pomegranate (*P. protopunica*), whose ethnobotanical significance is primarily medicinal; indeed, its fruits are reputed to be bitter and vesicant.

The rind, juice of the unripe fruits, and seeds were an essential component of ancient counterpoisons, and were also used in Arabian medicinal formulae to check loose bowels. Seeds are employed as an aphrodisiac in the folk medicine and magic of Mediterranean countries. The powdered bark has been used to expel worms; the rind of the fruit is a potent astrigent and may be employed as a gargle for sore throat. An Anglo-Saxon magical drink for curing headache from the *Old English Herbarium* employs Mistletoe steeped in wine, drunk from the rind of a Pomegranate.

The fruit, suffused with a rich, nutritive, red liquor, is often associated with gods and spirits of fertility. In Yoruba traditions, the fruit is associated with Yemaya, the mother of all living. According to some Greek traditions, the Pomegranate tree sprouted from the blood of Dionysus. The priests of Attis, the eternally slain and re-emergent one, bore pomegranates on their heads in the form of wreaths.

The tree and its fruit are associated with numerous marriage rituals in the near East in which the fruit is publicly smashed open, either by bride or bridegroom, on the wedding day. The Assyrian tradition, in which the plant was often associated with the Tree of Life, preserves an enchantment in which a man recited a love charm over the Pomegranate, then presented it to his beloved. As a charm of fertility and beneficence, a Greek bride crushed the fruits on entering her new home.

Kolyva, a ritual food made from Pomegranate seeds, Wheat, raisins, nuts, spices, and honey, was prepared in antiquity as an offering to placate chthonic deities such as Poseidon and Persephone. The food is still made in Greece where, on All

Souls' Day, girls and women arrayed in black bear the food to cemeteries and sprinkle it on graves.

> When a large target is made in the form of a drum from the skin of a panther after the skin has been tanned in bitter salt, and with the gall nut, and when one strikes on it with a piece of pomegranate wood, a gazelle which hears the sound of the drum dies after two or three hours. In this space of time, between hearing the sound and its death, it becomes like one cast so sick that it is unable to rise up or move.
>
> IBN WAHSHIYYA AL NABATI
> *Book on Poisons*, 950 CE

The engorged fruit, whether cut by the hand of humankind, or violently split as it ripens and dehisces, bleeds. It is thus perfectly emblematic of its two essential esoteric powers: fecundity and death-discarnation, the fruits of love and war. The divinity of the Pomegranate is optimized as the two aspects work in tandem; it is thus perfectly aligned with the deific form *Thanateros*, whose hidden Illuminates esteem as the connubium of Thanatos (death) and Eros (love)—the engine that drives magical power. Accordingly, the fruit is used in sexual sorcery, fertility charms, as well as funerary and necromantic rites.

In North Africa, pomegranate forms an essential component of a venerable ploughing consecration ritual. This Moroccan Arab custom commences by squeezing fresh pomegranate juice upon the horns of oxen before plowing, thus protecting the animals from the evil eye. The fruit is then eaten by the farmers present. A similar custom among Berbers crushes Quince.

Several medieval incense formulae for conjuring spirits or shades of the dead to visible appearance incorporate rind of Pomegranate, among other ingredients. Curiously, many of these formulae also utilize Henbane, known for its inebriating effects when burned.

The dried rind yields a valuable color long used for inks, paints and dyes, producing a hue ranging from black to brown to dark yellow ochre. The tannins present in the rind also serve as a ready vegetable fixative.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Fertility, Love-charm, Marriage, Chthonian Power, Funerary.
Element: Earth + Fire.
Planet: Venus and Pluto.
Deific Form: Yemaya, Dionysos, Persephone, Adonis, Venus.
Virtue: Syzygy.
Body Part: Womb, Blood.
Corporeal Action: Fortification, Cleansing.
Medicament: Astringent, Nutritive.
Eponymous Compounds: Punicin—$C_{27}H_{31}ClO_{15}$.
Emblem: A pregnant woman arrayed in crown and scepter, emerging from a cauldron of blood.

POPLAR

Populus spp.

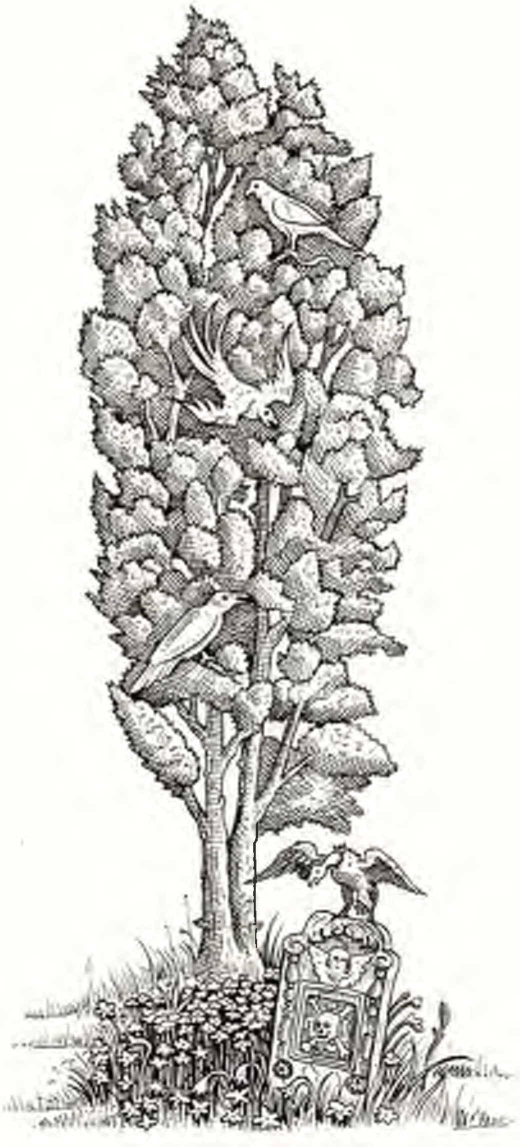
Betulaceæ (Birch Family)

POPULUS, comprising the True Poplars, is a large and diverse arboreal genus, constituting 85 named species of deciduous trees native to the Northern Hemisphere. Depending on species, they exhibit a range in height from 15-50 meters, having smooth bark, light wood, roughly triangular leaves, and the catkins so characteristic of the Birch Family. In general, Poplars are often conspicuous by their stately and columnar silhouette, the most extreme example of which is the Black Poplar (*Populus nigra*), one of the most common species referenced in European magic and myth. Aspen and Cottonwood, both trees of considerable magical gravitas, are properly considered types of Poplar. The tree provides a light wood which, though comparatively soft, is both workable and durable.

Poplar recurs in multiple strata of ancient myth. The tree was sacred to Hercules, who employed the leaves as a remedy for the venom of snakebite. The Groves of Academus, sacred to Athena, were of Poplar. The Heliades, the sisters of Phæton, were transformed into Black Poplars on the banks of the Eridanus River when their brother plunged into the waters in the flaming chariot of his father Helios.

In ancient Greece, the tree also had some regard as a funerary herb; sometimes the corpse was laid upon a bed of Poplar branches. Pythagorean burial customs specified the Dead be buried on leaves of Black Poplar, Olive, and Myrtle.

The botanical kinship of Poplar to the Willows (*Salix*) is resonated in the medicinal qualities of the bark of some species, such as White Poplar (*P. alba*), used as a folk cure for its fever-reducing potentials. Similarly, in Peruvian folk medicine the Cottonwood (*P. deltoidies*) is used as a valued calmative and nervine. The resinous buds of the tree, sometimes having ſtypic and insecticidal properties, are also a valued medicinal.



Populus nigra

The symbolic and magical attributes of the planets, as considered from the perspective of ancient doctrines of correspondence, align Poplar variously with Jupiter, Saturn and the Sun. As used in spell-craft and ceremonial magic, its associated occult powers are Fertility, Coercion, Immortality, Divination, Triumph, Potentiation, Sacrifice, Wealth, Fortification and Abundance. Poplars hold in common with Willow a certain litheness which manifeſts in the ability to bend or manipulate; despite the gloom and foreboding associated with the tree it was also used as a love charm. Abiding with the tree is also a sense of its service as a sacred intercessor; Poplar catkins left out at night in a small dish with water or cream was a favored offering to fairies.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF POPLAR

Manipulation, Pliability, Inducement, Yearning,
Carriage, Transference, Attrition, Termination,
Penitence, Ethereal Raiment, Brooding
Countenance, Veiled Threat,
and Horrendous
Action.

Several Poplar species are native to North America and have diverse plant-powers associated with them. Cottonwood in particular enjoys widespread veneration, and is used for a variety of purposes, including fetishes carved from its wood. The Montana tribe used the inner bark of the Narrowleaf Cottonwood (P. *anguſtifolia*) as an ingredient in the *kinnikinnick* native smoke.

The twigs may be used as an incense of fertility. In Morocco, a traditional suffumigation used at Midsummer was made from Poplar twigs and Pennyroyal, burned together for health and protection of liveſtock. It was also smoldered at the base of Fig trees to ensure abundant fruit.

POTATO

Solanum tuberosum

Solanaceæ (Nightshade Family)

NATIVE to South America, the Potato is an herbaceous perennial growing to juſt over a half meter in height. Its leaves are alternate being either simple or pinnately compound; its flowers exhibit considerable variation in color, and may be white, purple, lavender, red or blue, all with yellow ſtamens. The fruits are small, green, many-seeded berries, resembling small Tomatoes, and like the leaves of the plant are toxic. Like the flowers, the edible tubers are of diverse types, varying in shape, size, color, and flavor characteriſtics; more than 3,000 cultivars are known in the plant's evolutionary cradle, moſt originating from the Chilean Andes.

When the Potato was firſt introduced to Europe, there was an odd prohibition againſt the Plant in Burgundy, as it was said to promote leprosy. In some areas of Europe, the Potato was considered aphrodisiac. The poisonous fruits, which contain the steroidal glycoside solanine ($C_{45}H_{73}NO_{15}$), were used in love-philters of the 17th century. In Russian folklore, the Potato is a plant of strange and maligned origin, originating from the anus of a magician's corpse.

Nigel Pennick, in his *Secrets of East Anglian Magic*, relays the modern magical use of mummified potatoes as talismans against cramp and rheumatism. Carried on the person, these shrunken tubers may be considered part of the larger corpus of magic known as root-charming. The practice is also known in various regions of North America, such as the Ozark Mountains.

PRICKLY POPPY

Argemone mexicana

Papaveraceæ (Poppy Family)

INFERNAL Fig, as the Prickly Poppy is also known, is a hardy perennial native to Mexico with glaucous, spiny leaves, a yellow flower, and a prickly seed pod resembling a tiny cactus. Inhabiting dry and punishing environments the Poppy it is found on disturbed ground and barren soils and exhibits all the classic armaments and beauty of the 'noxious weed'. The plant grows to 1.5 meters and is noted for the golden resin which flows from its capsules, which contain a bitter, toxic admixture of alkaloids valued in folk medicine. Its obstreperous appearance was such that Gerard, as others before him, classified it as a Thistle. In vulgar nomenclature, the plant also answers to the names Chicalote, Cardo Santo, Golden Thistle, and Devil's Fig, appellations which give some indication of its powers. Owing to its opportunistic nature and propensity for colonizing wastelands, it is naturalized in many places worldwide.

> The fruit doth much resemble a fig in shape and bignesse, but so full of sharpe and venomous prickles that whosoever had one of them in his throat would doubtless send him packing either to Heaven or to Hell.
>
> JOHN GERARD
> *Herball, 1633*

Though it is often reviled as a pernicious weed by agricultural agencies, it enjoys folk medicinal and magical use in many places where it grows. All portions of the plant are utilized: dried leaves, flowers, seeds, latex collected from unripe capsules, and the root. Its action upon the body is diuretic, sedative, analgesic, narcotic and euphoriant; seeds are mildly hallucinogenic. Aztec and Mayan physicians used the herb to treat sundry complaints including dropsy, aberrations of the teeth and gums, headache, snakebites, kidney stones, diarrhea, asthma, and constipation. The juice is used as a remedy for warts or skin diseases, including topical cancers.

Three species of *Argemone* contain quantities of the important isoquinoline alkaloids such as berberine and protopine, concentrated in the resin extracted from the pod: *A. Mexicana*, *A. alba*, and *A. glauca*. Roots contain sanguinarine ($C_{20}H_{14}NO_4$), a powerful poison classified as an escharotic, meaning that it induces necrotization of the flesh.

In magical operations, it may be used for operations of warfare, marking boundaries, tenacity, and all such rituals as employ thistles and thorns. However, unlike the thorn, its power is expansive, rather than merely fixative. In planetary correspondence, it is strongly aligned with both Mars and the Sun, but these expressions receive a Saturnian tint due to the pervasive nature of its poison.

In some regions of Mexico, the dried leaves and flowers of Chicalote are smoked as an aphrodisiac; this suggests usage in ritual suffumigations of love-magic and the *orgia*. In eastern India, the plant is valued in tribal magic as a powerful force against noxious spirits.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF PRICKLY POPPY

Katabasis, Adversity, Fearlessness, Indomitability,
Intimidation, Abrasion, Puncture, Corrosion,
Debridement, Excoriation, Burning
Water, Drowning Fire,
Fleshly Damnation.

The herb is appropriate for death, funereal, and chthonian rites. In the cosmology of the Aztecs, the Prickly Poppy was associated with the underworld, which was populated with, among other things, whirling obsidian knives, cacti, thorny plants, and splinters of flint.

Sagahún reports that the Aztecs collected large amounts of the pulverized seeds, and molded it into an effigy of Huītzilōpōchtli, god of war and human sacrifice. The body was then ritually dismembered and consumed by the faithful.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Death, Funereal, Protection from Fascination, Warfare.
Planet: Mars, the Sun.
Element: Fire.
Deific Form: Huītzilōpōchtli.
Domain: Wasteland.
Therapeutic: Excoriation.
Affliction: Vainglory
Emblem: A masked warrior clad in golden feathers. In the left hand is an impaled skull. In the right hand rests a beating human heart.

PRIMROSE

Primula spp.
Primulaceæ (Primrose Family)

KNOWN by such common names as Our Lady's Keys and Our Lady's Cushion, Primrose is a perennial plant growing to 30 cm in height. Originally native to meadows, but now also grown in gardens for centuries. Its low-growing estate has led it to be considered somewhat 'diminutive' in the garden, though in favorable conditions it is both assertive and long lived. Its leaves are borne as a basal rosette; the flowers are generally white, yellow or pink. There is a seemingly endless number of garden hybrids and cultivars available, with astounding colors and patterns; a personal favorite is *Primula polyantha* 'Victoriana Gold Lace'. *Primula* is a large genus, with about 500 species with wide global distribution, and include Cowslip (*P. veris*) as well as Poison Primrose (*P. obconica*).

In folk medicine it has been used as a soporific, antispasmodic, and expectorant. Various simple preparations of the root and leaves, taken both internally and externally, have been made for burns, ringworm, and other dermal maladies. The leaves of many of the Primulaceæ are mild narcotics; Primrose and Cowslip (of which a mulled wine may be made), are good examples of this. An infusion of an ounce of the fresh leaves in a pint of boiling water is effective in this capacity, though effect will vary based on variety. A decoction of the roots has been used in folk medicine as a treatment for jaundice, and ointments for the expungement of ringworm are compounded from the leaves. Hildegard of Bingen recommended it as a counterbalance to melancholy, and a bulwark against insanity. Many of the scented garden varieties do produce an uplifting—though strangely beguiling—odor.

Primrose is an herb of Venus, and the flower has been used in folk magic as a love-charm.

The plant has strong associations with the ream of Faerie, both as a plant allied to the fair folk, and as a charm to prevent their intrusion in human affairs. On the Isle of Man, where it is known as *Oie Voaldyn*, the yellow blossoms were woven into protective garlands on Beltaine for protection of persons and livestock. An Irish custom also associates this flower with Beltaine, and the flowers were used to strew the front doorstep on May Day. Protective charms from these areas used a bunch of the flowers to prevent evil spirits, or fairies, from crossing through the front door of the home.

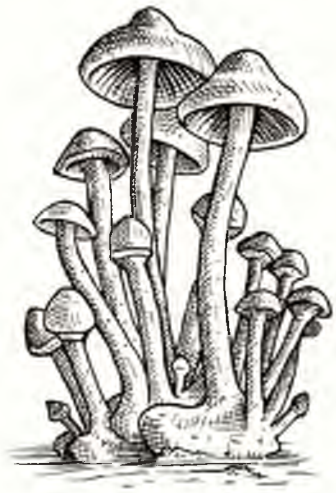
PRIVET

Ligustrum spp.
Oleaceæ (Olive family)

GENUS *Ligustrum* is comprised of about 50 species of compact shrubs native to Asia, Europe and Africa, many of which are much beloved of gardeners and horticulturists. Easily pruned, it is a favored species for hedges and topiary, having attractive and glossy oblong-lanceolate leaves, white flowers, and small black berries. The leaves of some Privets, including *Ligustrum vulgare*, render up an attractive green or yellow dye, and the berries yield an unsurpassed range of purple-greys and lavenders.

The fruit is toxic, though only moderately so, provoking gastric harangue. Pliny the Elder reported widespread contemporary medical use of the leaves for treating ulcers, particularly of the mouth. Recent research has shown that the leaves of some Privet species are effective in combatting certain species of *Staphylococcus* bacteria.

In ancient times, Privet wood was used for funeral pyres, and it was believed that fires arising from this wood flung wide the gates to the underworld. Although it belongs to the Olive family, many of whose plants are characterized by Solar correspondence, the spiritual essence has been connected in some sources with the Moon. The ancient Greek lyricist Anacreon wreathed his lyre with Privet branches as he chanted his verses.



PSILOCYBE MUSHROOM

Psilocybe spp.

Mycognosis: divine knowledge or wisdom received from a fungal entity. A kind of *myco-entheogenesis*, with many earthly intercessors. In addition to mushrooms, we may include among these divine messengers ascomycetes such as Ergot (*Claviceps purpurea*). And, as poets will attest, wine, beer and other primary fermentations arising from the action of *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* also participate in the mycognostic transmission, ever so much as the spirit of the grape and the ethanol molecule. Many persons, including some otherwise not predisposed to mystical thinking, swear by Stilton and certain blue cheeses, perhaps owing to the *Penicillin* molds responsible for their distinctive characteristics. Whether it was enshrined in orthodox religion, the preserve of sorcery or outlaw spirituality, or the result of accidental poisoning, the spirit-bridge between fungus and human is certainly ancient.

In the mycognostic panetheon, the genus *Psilocybe* must be considered a preeminent retinue, with an ancient religious and magical pedigree. It contains well over 250 species, and in general is a small mushroom having light gray or white stipes and a golden-tan cap, becoming darker at its center. Many species are characterized by a blue spore impression when bruised. As a genus, Psilocyve is widely distributed in temperate and tropical climates, growing on decaying organic matter in open pastures and meadows and also cultivated in illicit indoor gardens. Some species, such as the potent P. *azurescens*, can proliferate in certain hardwood landscape much, or even on shredded cardboard.

In ancient Mexico, one embodiment of Psilocybe Mushrooms was *teotlnanácatl*, a Nahuatl power-medicine usually taken in honey, described by Fray Bernardino Sagahún in his 16th century treatise *A General History of the Things of New Spain*. He wrote of those consuming the Mushrooms:

> The first thing which they ate at the gathering was small, black mushrooms which they called nanacatl. These are intoxicating and cause visions to be seen and even provoke sensuousness. They ate these before dawn, and they also drank chocolate before daylight. They ate these little mushrooms with honey, and when they began to be excited by them, they began to dance, some singing, others weeping, for they were already intoxicated by the mushrooms. Some did not want to sing but sat down in their quarters and remained there as if in a meditative mood. Some saw themselves dying in a vision and wept; others saw themselves being eaten by a wild beast; others imagined that they were capturing prisoners in battle, that they were rich, that they possessed many slaves, that they had committed adultery and were to have their heads crushed for the offense, that they were guilty of a theft for which they were to be killed, and many other visions which they saw. When the intoxication had passed, they talked over among themselves the visions they had seen.

In *The Marriage of the Sun and Moon*, Dr. Andrew Weil describes a modern Mazatec rite he participated in, employing the Mushrooms as a eucharist. The rite featured both pagan and Christian iconography and invoked the powers of San Isidro and other intercessors.

The Spirit-Retinue of Psilocybe Mushroom

Awe, Bemusement, Distension, Oddity, Chromaticity, Eruption, Confrontation, Eclipse, Introversion, Monstrosity, Janiform Vista, Forced Perspective, and Sapient Discourse.

The Mushroom's mundane reputation as an 'hallucinogen' or 'psychedlic' belies its broad and often integrated effects on body, mind, spirit, and emotion. One may be affected on any of these levels, some, or all. Personal self-reference under the sway of the Mushroom may be left intact, teased, warped, or usurped entirely. As a deific form, it is particularly adept at generating illusion in order to destroy delusion; for this reason, it is of use in psychotherapy.

A companion and I walk the cornfields by moonlight. Suddenly he is no longer by my side, but embedded within the fields. Though he remains a man, he is not singular, but legion—his body is multiplied many times over, an army at attention amid the rows, like the stalwart earthen warriors of Qin Shi Huang. In many voices, speaking in unison, my companion tells me that this field is a holy place...it is his protector, and this is where his spirit will abide after death.

* * *

The Mushroom provokes an epiphany about an incident which occurred several years ago, when we were approached by three hideous visitors. They never spoke to us, but gestured, and spoke amongst themselves in an indistinct muttering sound, like the whine of a cloud of gnats. A lot of people saw them, and for many years after that night we often wondered whether their abominable faces and clothing were natural, or, perhaps, a deformative result of their travel after they were 'translated' to our world. The sudden perspective provided by the Mushroom, years later, is that when the visitors came to us, we failed a test of utmost importance, and because of this we are forever marked. We were so terrified of the visitors' appearance and inexplicable qualities that none could see that they offered us a gift of great power, yet were paralyzed to act. And so, having encountered what they surely perceived as our ingratitude, they went away and were never seen again.

* * *

A walk in the woods with friends is proposed and begun. At first, there is an exhilaration of forest smells—green, coniferous scents and the decay of deciduous leaves. Likewise, the sensation of cold November air on my face, and the crunching of twigs underfoot are perceived richly and singly, but begin to merge. Each step taken deeper into the forest seems to accelerate a peculiar sensual gradient, escalating and fusing perceptions until one is absorbed into the world. One cannot resist the incoming tide of alienation; all action and perception becomes unified in a glorious, aberrant pilgrimage to Cockaigne.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Vision, Divination.
Element: Fire + Water.
Planet: Sun + Moon.
Deific Forms: Teotlnanácatl.
Divine Appellation: God-Flesh.
Alchemical Concept: Conjunctio.
Virtues: Union, Reintegration.
Corporeal Locus: Solar Plexus.
Therapeutic: Self-Reflection.
Affliction: Narcissism.
Physical Domains: Meadow and Sky.
Philosophical Domains: Self and Other.
Eponymous Compounds: Psilocybin, Psilocin.
Embodied State: Self-Overcoming.
Atavistic Power: The Ancestors Enfleshed.
Emblem: A chalice engraved with an eye, from which emerges a hand holding a mirror.

QUINCE

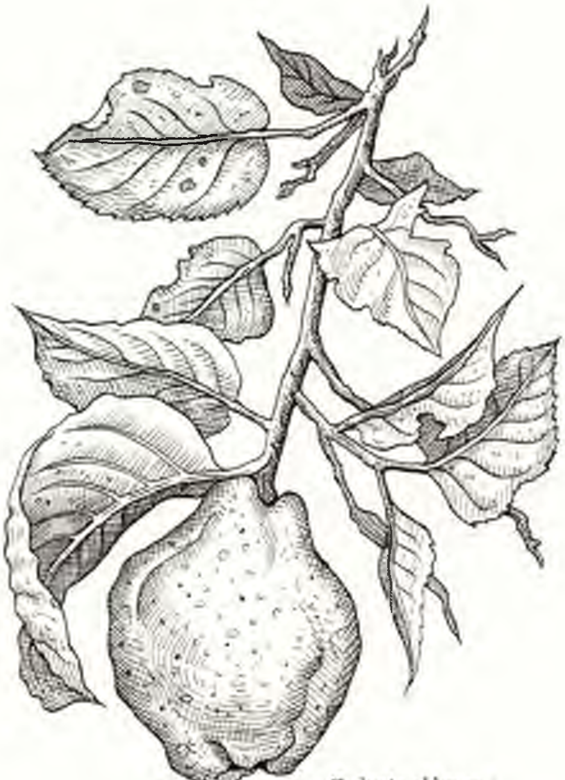
Cydonia oblonga; Cydonia sinensis
Roseaceaæ (Rose Family)

QUINCE is a deciduous tree, often of shrubby habit, with gray bark and magenta flowers emerging in late Winter. Its large fruits, golden or pale yellow, have the appearance of an ancient and primordial Pear. Sometimes grown for its fruit, it is also grown for its decorative flowering branches, as well as used as rootstock for Pear and Hawthorn.

Ripe seeds are an important source of mucilaginous hydrocolloids which comprise 20% their weight, and which in extract form is a valuable ingredient in cosmetics. For this reason, it is also valued medicinally as a demulcent: an old remedy for sore throat employs a gargle of quince seeds steeped in rosewater for several hours. Culpeper regarded its juice as a supreme antidote against poison.

Quince receives and magnifies the planetary virtues of Venus; its magical properties are Love, Lust, Allure, Marrriage; Ward Aginst Fascination, Transmutation, and Charisma. For the Greeks, Quince was sacred to Aphrodite. Pliny the Roman noted that Quince flowers adorned the statues of the gods.

> Their fragrance is the best part of them, and for this they may be worth raising: to scent your chamber.
>
> HENRY DAVID THOREAU
> *Wild Fruits*



Cydonia oblonga

Its beguiling aroma is best experienced by letting a single fruit ripen slowly indoors, perfuming the house slowly, and with its wild majesty. The indescribable flavor of the fruit is elusive, sometimes hinted at in jellies that have, in the process of their making, boiled away much of the soul of the plant. Yet in Villeneuve-sur-Vère in the south of France, Laurent Cazottes produces what may be the most singularly magical expression of the fruit. Produced in his artisanal distillery is a wild Quince wine which may occasionally be obtained, with some devoted seeking, beyond French borders. In partaking of it, one chances to encounter not only the wild majesty of the fruit, but a semblance of the entire tree: a sensorial encapsulation of the tree's ancient alignment with Aphrodite and Venus, and a most pleasurable means of communing with its nymph.

> In the spring flourish Kydonian quince trees
> where [stands] the inviolate garden of the Maidens.
>
> IBYCUS
> *Fragment 286*

An old custom prescribed that a newly married couple eat Quince together, in order to assure harmony in their union. On St. George's Day in Eastern Europe, branches of Quince or Apple are used to bedeck stable doors to bless dairy herds.

Branches of Quince, known as *membrillo*, are used by Peruvian *curanderos* to dispell noxious spirits and, in particular, fend off the attacks of bewitching sorcerers as part of curing rituals.

RABBIT TOBACCO

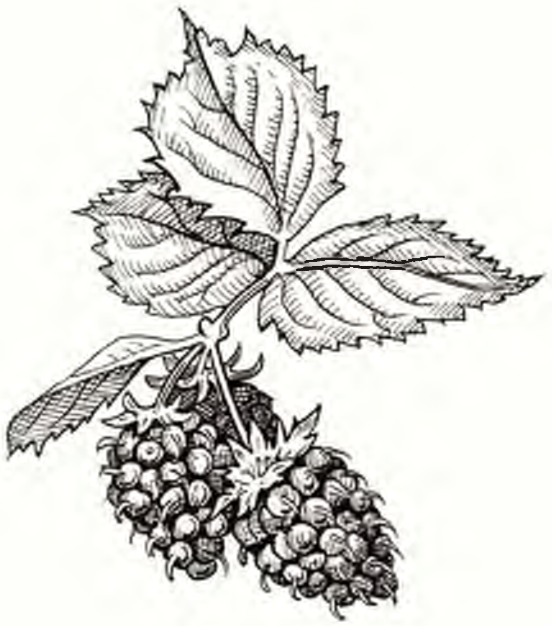
Pseudognaphalium obtusifolium

Asteraceæ (Sunflower Family)

NATIVE to North America east of the Rocky Mountains, this strong power-plant is also known by the name Sweet Everlasting, a reference to the characteristic maple syrup scent the plant effuses when crushed. It is an annual or biennial herb, growing to 1 meter, with oblong, with tomentose leaves to 8 cm and clusters of small cream-colored flower heads. It prefers sunny locations with sandy soil, prairie, and savannah. It was formerly classed as genus *Gnaphalium*, from the Greek *gnaphallon* (γνάφαλλον) or 'wool-tuft.'

The plant was a valued incense, smudge, and kinnickinnick, or smoking mixture. Also known as Owl's Crown, it was burned as a smudge against evil spirits, and to revive those who had fainted. The Muscogee Creek peoples used a decoction of the plant as a body wash to drive away ghosts or evil spirits which haunted a person. In Southern Africa, the related species *Pseudognaphalium undulatum* was used as a charm to retain youthfulness.

The virtues of Rabbit Tobacco are aligned with the planetary dominions of the Sun, and its spiritual powers, as manifest through centuries of use, are Exorcism, Allure, Restoration and Protection.



RASPBERRY

Rubus idaeus
Rosaceæ (Rose Family)

RASPBERRY is a sprawling, thorny perennial with edible aggregate fruits, preferring to grow in the partial shade of forest canopies. The European species R. *idaeus* bears similarity to the American Raspberry (R. *strigosus*), and some botanists classify them as a single species. Though delicious in its wild state, the fruit has many cultivated varieties which are grown commercially, selected for attributes such as fruit size, color, and taste. The commercial alcoholic liqueur Chambord, inspired by traditional 17th century French recipes, is made from both black and red raspberries.

In folk medicine it is a uterine tonic, astringent, nervine, and nutritive. The root, in similar fashion to Blackberry, was boiled and drunk for its efficacy in treating diarrhea and bowel complaints. However, the plant is especially aligned with the womb and its complete dominion and energetics. A decoction of the leaves is safely utilized for easing labor pains and to address painful menstruation. is seen in English folk medicine, where Raspberry was recognized for its twofold action of inducing abortion and preventing miscarriage. Tea brewed from the leaves was thought to be imbued with the power of the Sun and known accordingly as Hyperion Tea.

Via the Doctrine of Signatures, the plant is allied with the planetary powers of Venus and Jupiter. Its wholesome and restorative qualities render it a power herb of Healing and Fortification. More generally, it serves as a Love Charm, and its occult power is thus focused on Allure, but also communion—the binding of hearts in love. As such it is also a favored plant for marriage. In North America, sprouts of the related Salmonberry (*Rubus spectabilis*) were employed by the Quileute formerly used in courting ceremonies. As with most of the genus *Rubus*, the scarlet juices of the fruit may serve as a ritual stain, either for paper, or for adornment of the body itself.

REED

LIKE the designation *Everlasting*, 'Reed' is not a name of proper botanical standing, but usually refers to a diverse group plants sharing a common attribute. In this case, it describes plants of thin, grasslike form which inhabit sodden soils, ditches, and wetlands. The Reed group ecompasses plants of the genus *Cyperus* (Sedges), *Typha* (Bulrushes), *Phragmites* (Reed Grasses), and *Sparganium* (Bur-Reeds) as well as *Arundo* and *Phalaris*. Occasionally, the genus *Juncus* (True Rushes) are also called Reeds, as is *Calamagrostis* (Smallweeds). Other genera may be included, depending upon who is using the term. A 'Reed' may also be a wind instrument made from a hollow plant stem.

Because the term is so general, historical records documenting use of 'Reeds' in folklore, magic and ceremony are often unreliable when seeking to identify a specific plant. Identity can, however, sometimes be teased out of the record by way of location and cultural context. Further complicating the matter, the word 'Reed' in some locations may refer to a specific plant, or to a general group of slender grasslike plants populating boggy places.

Esoterically considered, Reeds are an emanation of subterranean water, and an emissary of the marsh. This estate is recalled in ancient Greek myth; the nymph Syrinx, pursued by a lustful Pan, was consumed by the Earth, which brought forth Reeds in the place where she vanished. The ancient reed-pipe bears her name. Dwelling at the nexus of liquid and solid, Reeds partake of both physical properties and serve as a flexible craft medium for such objects as woven baskets.

Historically, Reeds have had a few important magical usages. Mathias Perger, the accused Tyrolean sorcerer from the mid-17th century, was alleged to have summoned the wind spirits using a *Todtennadel* made from a hollow reed with a viper's tongue within. Prior to blowing into the instrument, he used a prayer of conjuration:

> *Kumm, kumm Osterwind,*
> *Der gegen Tauern ist...*

The instrument may have been fashioned from the Pfalrohr (*Arundo donax*), whose hollow stems have been used for a variety of wind instruments. Reeds have also been used for strewing, and in Crown of Thorns relics.

RHODODENDRON

Rhododendron spp.
Ericaceæ (Heath Family)

THE genus *Rhododendron* contains over 640 accepted species of deciduous and evergreen shrubs, with populations concentrated in Asia, Eurasia and North America. Most species have showy, brightly colored flowers, and some species are considerably toxic to humankind. The intoxicating shrubs known as Labrador Teas, formerly genus *Ledum*, are now classed with genus Rhododendron as R. *groenlandicum* and R. *tomentosum*. Some species are used medicinally; R. *anthopogon* is a cardiac and is used in Tibetan medicine for strengthening the heart and circulatory function. The plant is allied with Mercury and the Moon, and its allied spiritual powers are Exorcism, Blessing, Triumph, and Oblation.

The most ancient and widespread magical usage of Rhododendron species would seem to be as a suffumigant, both for magical and intoxicating purposes; the branches, leaves and flowers are the portions bearing the virtuous principles. The fragrant leaves of *Rhododendron anthropogon* are much esteemed in Tibet as incense, as are R. *cephalanthum* and R. *primuliflorum*. In Bhutan, the species R. *glaucophyllum* and R. *setosum* are used as incense for placating spirits. Varied species are prized for the fragrant smoke they create when burned. Among the Shuhi of southwestern China, leaves and branches of R. *trichostomum* were burnt as incense to communicate with deific forms.

The nineteenth-century researcher Julius Klaproth documented the rites of the Ossetians of the northern Caucasus, early modern descendants of the ancient Scythians. Looming large in their magical iconography is the Prophet Elijah, to whom goats were sacrificed in caves for a bountiful harvest and to avert hail; smoldering leaves and branches of *Rhododendron caucasicum* were used in these rites; the resulting smoke plunged seers into a sleep pregnant with omen-rich dreams.

ROSE

Rosa spp.
Rosaceæ (Rose Family)

A DECIDUOUS plant of either shrubby or climbing habitus, having well-thorned stems and conspicuous five-petaled flowers, often fragrant. There is an abundance of wild-growing rose species, the genus *Rosa* contains about 150 accepted species. The portions employed are the leaves, blossoms, petals and hips, and unopened buds; the canes of very old bushes can become woody and dense, and are even suitable for carving. Rosewater or hydrosol may be misted on the face as a mild stimulant. Rose fruits, or hips, are one of the richest naturally occurring sources of ascorbic acid (Vitamin C), and in some species can produce considerable amounts of sugar. The leaves are a mild laxative; in Native American traditions, leaves and inner bark of various wild endemic Rose species such as R. *gymnocarpa* and R. *woodsia* were smoked for pleasure. Also employed, but quite costly, are the precious oils of the flower, such as Attar of Rose, or Rose Otto, the distillation process of which was perfected by the ancient Persians.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF ROSE

Passion, Elation, Devotion, Preeminence, Cardiognosis, Epiphany, Secrecy, Mystery, Harmony, Resilience, Sensual Armament, Fleshly Adoration, and Supernal Revelation.

* * * * *
* * *
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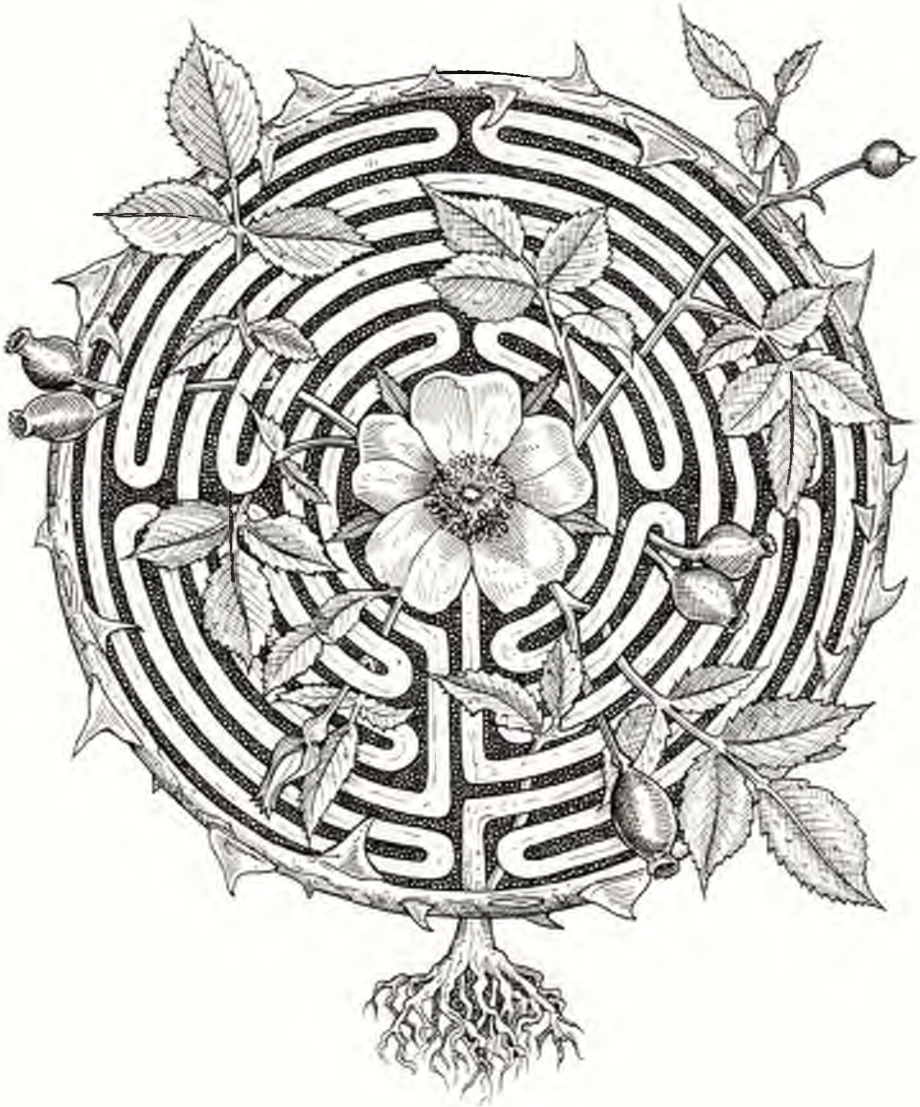


As it corresponds with the virtues of the planets, the companions of Rose are Venus and Jupiter. Hardier wild forms such as the Dog Rose (*Rosa canina*) are often associated with Mars, owing to their indomitability, aloofness and obstreperous thorns. Its esoteric powers are manifold, and include Love, Beauty, Allure, Fortification, Longevity, Oblation, Funerary, and Binding the Dead.

> *The Rose was for the Initiates the living and blooming symbol of the revelation of the harmonies of being. It was the emblem of beauty, life, love, and pleasure. Flamel, or the Book of the Jew Abraham, made it the Heiroglyphical sign of the accomplishment of the Great Work.*
>
> ALBERT PIKE
> *Morals and Dogma of the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite of Freemasonry*, 1871

In ancient Rome, Rose was a popular offertory herb, used to garland idols, stautes and shrines. Petals were also strewn on graves as an offering to the dead, and sometimes living Rose bushes were planted on graves. In ancient Roman mortuary rituals, the ashes of the cremated dead were mixed with Rose leaves, Frankincense, and wine before being interred in a sacred urn. Later, on the Rose Feast of May 23, the urns were decorated by surviving relatives. In more recent times, a Romany custom forbids the plucking of Roses from graves, as such an act is likely to bring on sudden death.

> Rose is also good to add to potions, unguents, and all medications. If even a little rose is added, they are so much better, because of the good virtues of the rose.
>
> HILDEGARD OF BINGEN
> *Physica*, 1158

In medieval Arabian toxicology, rosewater was a specific against poison, being present in a large number of theriacs and antidote formulae, as well as fulfilling an implied apotropaic magical function. In this role it was taken internally, and also used as an exterior wash. Reflecting this power of the Rose against malign influence, a Slavonian charm against bewitched cattle employs a thorough smudge of the animal with Roses burnt on coals.

In his 1621 chef-d'œuvre *Anatomy of Melancholy*, Robert Burton recommended the room be sprinkled with both Rose-water and Rose-vinegar to overcome melancholy. With this I am in complete agreement, but consider also that when entreating the Rose for its uplifting power, we need not always begin in the depths of despair, as its capacity for elation is limitless.

Though floriculturists and their customers will vehemently disagree, I propose that the hybrid tea Rose represents a degradation, rather than an exaltation, of the spirit of the plant, their bloodlines carefully stripped of independence, hardiness, fertility, and disease resistance, in favor of the temporal flash of the garden dandy. Instead, my heart is drawn to those native species such as *Rosa californica* and *R. gymnocarpa*, which harmonize with local microclimate and are important wildlife habitat and insect forage. Appropriate to place, climate, and ecological niche, they may flourish at will, and even cast their seed for the surety of future generations. This preference aside, I concede that breeders have been able to achieve mutant varieties with stunning appearance, such as the Black Baccara, evoking the darkest shade of blood-red, appearing in some lights burgundy, and in others deepest black.

CORRESPONDENCES
Magical Powers: Love, Allure, Harmony, Funerary.
Planet: Venus, Jupiter.
Element: Water.
Virtue: Transcendent Love.
Deific Forms: Venus, Eros.
Alchemical Concept: The Arcanum.
Corporeal Locus: Heart.
Therapeutic: Amorous Desire.
Affliction: Jealousy.
Eponymous Compounds: Damascenone.
Emblem: A human heart within a pentagram, set amidst a circle of thorns.

ROSEMARY

Salvia rosmarinus
Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

A HARDY, fragrant evergreen herb, Rosemary is native to the Mediterranean, where it has accumulated rich traditions of ethnobotanical uses spanning millennia. It is the best example of the so-called 'woody Lamiaceae', the long-living members of the Mint Family known for developing thick, woody stems and trunks. Some varieties are prostrate, attaining a mere 25 cm in height, whilst others may form small hedges, reaching two meters in height, such as the cultivar 'Tuscan Blue'. The flowers, generally, are pale to dark blue or purple. Uncommon pink-flowered cultivars such as Majorca Pink, and those bearing white blossoms, such as 'Albiflorus' are also available. The plant prefers bright sun and well-drained soil and is drought resistant. In ancient Egypt, it was a valued aromatic component known as *nkpt*; the Akkadians similarly prized it, calling it *ma-eres*.

In soils and climates where it thrives, its habit may become both woody and invasive. Certain individuals of great age can develop woody trunks and branches as thick as a human arm. While unusual, this rare wood is nevertheless useful for carving amulets and small votive statues.

The herb may be used in rituals and formulae to renew youth. A 16th century prescription advised baths of Rosemary to make one "lusty, lively, youthful and youngly." Indeed, strong decoctions serve well as a ritual bath and both perfume and tonify the skin. The Romans revered the plant for its powers of beneficence and eternal vigor, using its greenery to wreath their household gods, and smoldering the leaves as a purifying suffumigant for livestock.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF ROSEMARY

Recollection, Recrudescence, Restoration, Harmony, Memorialization, Constitution, Verdant Enclosures, Awakened Images, Virtuous Memory, Seraphic

Countenance, Feminine Reverence, Saintly Intercession, and Fragrant Proscription.

*

Known by its old magical name Corona Regis, it was a powerful suffumigant used to drive away devils, and the dried leaves and wood provide a ready perfume. In Morocco, its smoke was traditionally used to purify, and to drive away smallpox. In Central and South America, the entire plant was burned as incense against evil spirits. In ancient Islamic sorcery, a complex Rosemary suffumigation, used in tandem with a burnt offering of human blood and the crushed heads of a hoopoe and a crow, generated a 'vision of angels descending from their abode in the heavens.'

Its magical powers are Protection from Maleficia, Healing, Curse-lifting, Divination, Exorcism, Fidelity, Longevity, and Fortification. In temperament, action, and habitus it is resonant with the planetary virtues of the Sun.

> *If you procure a spoon made of the stock or root of this shrub, in the day you drink some broth with it, you will not receive harm from poison, and you will be preserved from thunder and lightning, as well as all injurious assaults.*
>
> THE PHYSICIANS OF MYDDFAI

The leaves and flowers of the plant were used by the Welsh to allay nightmares and anxiety while sleeping, placed under the head after retiring for the night. *Bancke's Herbal* of 1525 instructs the sleeper to place Rosemary leaves under the bed to alleviate evil dreams.

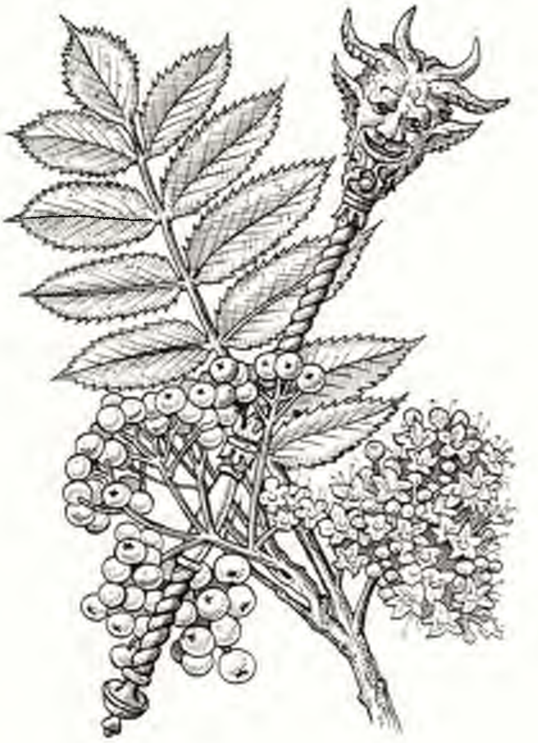
To induce prophetic dreams, an old English spell employed a sprig of the herb dipped in wine vinegar and water, then placed on the breast before retiring to bed on the eve of St. Magdalen.

Funerary traditions associated with Rosemary valued the flower for strewing on graves. Owing to its rich smell, the hard wood of its stems and its hardiness, the freshly-clipped sprigs well serve the function of a ritual sprinkler.

In European folk magic, the herb's flowers were worn over the heart as a potent amulet to ward off noxious spirits. Sprigs are carried on the person as a demonifuge, or to suppress the spiritual fetor of noxious persons. For this same purpose, a strong decoction of leaves and twigs can be used to wash the body, allowing it to air dry. In rural Spain, branches and leaves of the plant are used as a preventative against the Evil Eye.

CORRESPONDENCES

Magical Powers: Wealth, Attraction, Healing.
Planet: Sun.
Element: Fire and Earth.
Star: Alphecca (α Coronae Borealis).
Body Part: Mind.
Virtue: Equilibrium.
Chemical Virtues: Camphor.
Eponymous Compounds: Rosmarinic Acid.
Emblem: A green hand, emerging from a dark crypt, bearing a golden scroll.



ROWAN

Sorbus aucuparia, Sorbus spp.
Rosaceæ (Rose Family)

ROWANS inhabit a distinct group of trees in the Rose family known as the Mountain Ashes, genus *Sorbus*, with about 250 accepted species. *Sorbus aucuparia* populates the temperate northern hemisphere, growing to a height of 15 meters, but more often smaller, with smooth gray to brown bark and pinnately-compound leaves, each leaflet having serrated edges. It has white or pale-yellow flowers, and distinctive small red berries ripen in Autumn. It is additionally known by the names Whitty Tree, Witchen, Quickbane, Rodden and Rantree.

An infusion of the leaves comprises a traditional remedy for rheumatism. The natural acid profile of the fruit, encompassing both tartaric and malic, is of ideal balance for fermentation, and yields agreeable wines and meads. The berries yield a light orange-tan color in natural dyeing, mordanted with alum. Like many trees in the Rose family, the leaves of Rowan contain prussic acid, or hydrogen cyanide.

In planetary correspondence, Rowan is aligned with Saturn. Its ritual powers are Exorcism, Protection from Maleficia, Appeasement of Færie, Protection for Animals, Longevity, and Allure. Some northern European magical traditions employ Rowan as the wood of choice for wands or other magically-consecrated branches; the limbs of the tree also have repute as a rhabdomantic wand for metal-divining. The twigs are used as charms to avert the Evil Eye; Scots charms typically use the wood in combination with red thread. To protect them from disease and rank spirits, livestock was switched with Rowan branches; the act also ensured fertility.

The Rowan tree was widely regarded to be a haven for beneficent fairies. Various magical tools and fetishes for the protection of livestock were fashioned of Rowan wood, including round hoops for sheep to jump through and pieces of yokes to protect oxen. Berries were sometimes cut into ring-shapes and tied, with red string, to cows' tails; small Rowan crosses were also used in this way. Pieces of the wood were also incoporated into barns and the frames of houses for protection, as well as ships to protect them on the waters.

The Spirit-Retinue of Rowan

Jurisdiction, Solemnity, Boon, Interdiction, Reprisal, Reparation, Quarantine, Isolation, Haunted Vales, Charmed Peripheries, Sanguine Reverence, Fruited Divinity, and Strong Medicine.

In the folk magic of Nova Scotia, berries were collected and hung in the house to cause magical paralysis and prevent witchcraft; the branches were placed in animal pens as protection from curses. Strings of Rowan berries are an old protection-charm in the British Isles; the berries are used by Somerset Romany as a love charm.

During the Inquisition, among the accusations brought against those accused as witches was the charge of cursing butter churns, preventing cream from clabbering properly. This gave rise to the use of a curse-proof churn-staff made from Rowan wood.

Some streams of Icelandic lore relate that the Rowan and Juniper are mortal enemies, and must not be brought into the same house, at the risk of destroying it by fire. In other folklore traditions, these two trees work together in harmonious magic, especially for the protection of sailing vessels.

In one Russian charm a Rowan tree is sought out as *Tsar Musaila*, chief forest goblin, to answer as to why a person known to the querant has fallen ill. After a series of rituals and writing out an address to the goblin, the tree is threatened with archers and axes if it does not answer.

Ancient Irish Druids kindled fires of Rowan to summon sympathetic war-spirits before going into battle. A druidic weather-working magic burned the twigs of Rowan to raise a mist and confuse enemies.

The American Rowan or American Mountain Ash (*Sorbus americana*) flourishes in Southeastern Canada, the Northeastern United States, and south into the Appalachian Mountains. It possesses many similar properties to the British Rowan, and is known by the name *Witch-Wood*, for pieces of the wood were carried on the person as a charm to keep witches away.

Sorbus domestica, also known as the Service Tree, though not as widely known in magic as her sister Rowan, is no less potent a spirit. In Finnish lore, the spirit of the tree keeps watch over livestock, and shepherds were known to plant a stave of the Tree in the pasture, to which they offered prayers for protection of the flocks. It is recorded that in the British Isles, though the tree was rare there, the berries were strung up outside the home to prevent the entrance of witches. The berries are still used to brew hedge wines, beer and gale.

CORRESPONDENCES

Essence: Ministration.
Magical Powers: Warding, Protection, and Allure.
Planet: Saturn.
Element: Fire.

Body Part: Blood.
Domains: Elphame, Graveyard.
Virtue: Preservation.
Emblem: A burning war-shield bearing the carved face of a devil.

RUBIACEÆ

Once known as the Madder family for the dye plant of that name (*Rubia tinctorum*) famously yielding its signature red. Equally known as the coffee family, the Rubiaceae also includes notable genera such as *Galium* (Bedstraws) as well as *Coffea*. The family is massively distributed worldwide, with over 600 genera and over 13,000 species. Comprised of herbs, shrubs, and small trees, the plants of the Rubiaceae often feature medicinal virtues, useful bark and wood, pigments, and fruits or seeds which can be roasted for food or beverages. The family is especially well represented with endemic species in Hawai'i such as Ahakea (*Bobea brevipes*).

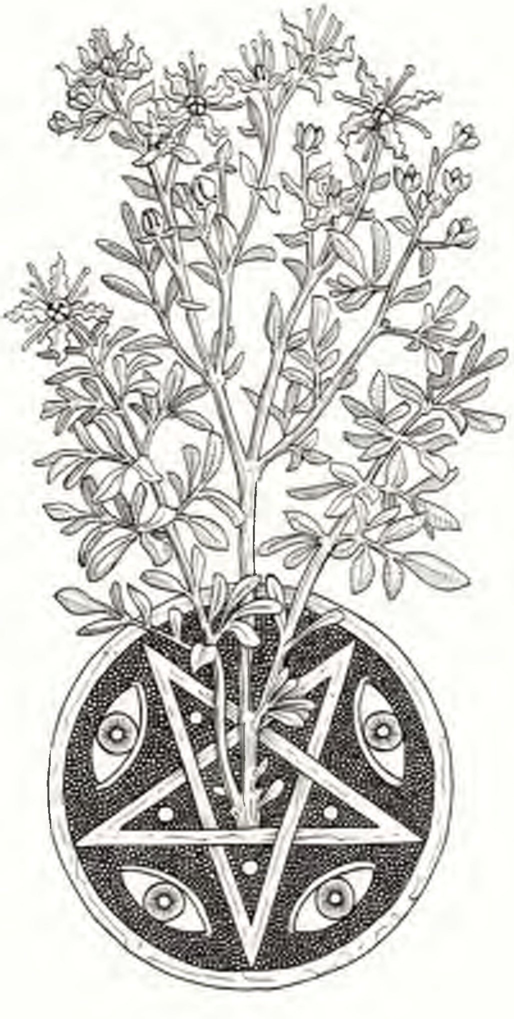
RUE

Ruta graveolens
Rutaceæ (Rue Family)

EVERGREEN in habitus, Rue is a shrubby, glaucous herb native to the Mediterranean region, growing to to 0.5 meters in height. It has acrid, round-lobed, aromatic leaves and bright yellow flowers. The stems of the plant produce a potent sap, which may cause blisters or skin rashes in some individuals. However, through working with the plant for decades I have found this often-repeated admonition to be somewhat overstated. Toxicity can vary from plant to plant, and from human to human. Its scent is distinctive, being acrid, balsamic, floral and vaguely camphoraceous.

The leaves and flowers, and, less frequently, the essential oil are the parts valued in medicine and magic. In physic, its virtues are are stimulant, antiseptic, circulatory tonic, and abortifacient. The herb has been used to treat colic and epilepsy and other nervous imblanaces. Rue has also been a valued remedy against respiratory discomfort and derangement. The essential oil proffers a scent both disturbing and alluring, and contains toxic ketones and fourocoumarins.

Among the planets it is aligned with the Sun, also bearing influences of Mars and Saturn. Its various powers in magic are attraction, love, coercion, protection from fascination, binding, reversing, protection from poisons, chastity, and malevolence. Medieval European lore reckoned it sovereign against all poisons; those wishing to touch poison hemlock were admonished to smear themselves with rue as a counter poison. Traditionally it was mixed with Rosemary and burned as incense against the Evil Eye, or sprigs of it were hidden in clothing for the same purpose. In the 1830s, African slaves sold Rue on the streets of Rio de Janeiro to clients who hid sprigs in their turbans as protection from bad luck. The herb is still sold for much the same purposes, in the same place, to this day.



Attesting to the herb's ancient reputation as a magical theriac, a potion from *The Leyden Papyrus* to extract "venom from the heart of a man who has been made to drink a potion", is made by drinking wine in which Rue has been steeped. Another magical Theriac from the same source is for healing the bite of a mad dog, made from Rue pounded with honey.

In some streams of popular lore, *malefici* were said to utilize Rue in potions to effect destructive magic. Conversely, however, Culpeper states: "Rue is as great an enemy to poison as any that grows." 15th and 16th century Zoroastrian texts mention a demon-chasing recipe compounded of Rue, vinegar, and Garlic. The plant's powers of putting evil spirits to flight are effective regardless of whether the practitioner is of fair or foul intent: at a witch trial in Alsace of 1589, a woman accused was charged with scaring off the Devil with Blessed Salt, wax, and Rue.

A *Brujeria* love-talisman is made with Rue, Sage wine and a coin. The two herbs, along with a small portion of the hair of the beloved, are boiled in a pot of wine, along with a coin. The coin must then be touched to the skin of the beloved, in the vicinity of the boiling pot, while uttering the following words:

Rose of Love,
Flower of Thorns.

In the rites of Palo Mayombe, the creation of the ferocious *nganga* spirit is a complex ceremony carried out in a large vessel. A strange brew is made containing, among other things, human remains, blood of the *mayombero*, Rue, Red Pepper, Garlic, Ginger, Onion, and Cinnamon.

Washing the floor with a strong infusion of Rue is an ancient charm for preventing a sorcerer from entering the house. The robust aromatic properties of the plant may be easily extracted into vinegar, wine or distilled spirits simply by steeping the fresh leaves and stems for at least 24 hours. When its aromatics are extracted in this form, they are on their own, or may favorably blend with woody aromatic plants in the Mint Family such as Savory, Mondarda, and Lavender.

> Rew is a noble hearbe to giue it right,
> To chew it fasting, it will purge the sight.
> One quality thereof yet blame I must,
> It makes men chaste, and women fils with lust.
> —*Regimen Sanitatis Salernitanum*
> 13th c.

R. *graveolens* is not the sole Rue species esteemed with this broad panoply of magical powers. In India, sprigs of R. *chalepenssis* are used as talismans in the home to ward against evil spirits. The same plant in Belize is used to arrest nightmares; four sprigs are placed under the pillow in a cross-pattern before sleep. Leaf-infused water of the same plant is also used to dispel witchcraft. Tunisian Rue (R. *montana*), native to North Africa, Spain, and Southern France, is noted for its power in dissipating the Evil Eye. Bunches are hung behind doors, and a twig is placed under the mattress for protection.

A traditional Neapolitan amulet against the Evil Eye known as the *Cimaruta* depicts stylized sprigs of Rue interwoven with apotropaic symbols such as horned crescents, keys, daggers, & roses.

Ærial portions of the related species *tezdit*, also known as Fringed Rue (*Ruta chalepensis*) are used in a similar manner across North Africa. In addition to numerous medicinal uses such as treatment of male sterility, its aroma is used to drive scorpions away, and the plant is also burned as a fumigant to chase evil spirits. R. *angustifolia*, is carried as a charm against contamination in Morocco.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF RUE

Extradiction, Deliverance, Forthrightness, Alignment, Preservation, Tingling, Stimulation, Pruriency, Impeccability, Subjugation, Resolute Action, Scattered Contagion, and Brusque Sweetness.

RUSH

Juncus spp.
Juncaceæ (Rush Family)

IDENTIFICATION, in part, relies on the morphology of the small brown flowers emerging directly from the side of the main stem, and differences between species can be very subtle. Found in wet soils, Rushes grow in warm tropical and colder areas, on heathland and in alpine conditions. The genus *Juncus* contains about 300 species, and heights can range from a few centimeters to more than two meters, as with the Giant Rush (*Juncus ingens*).

The dried, pithy stem-interior of second-year rushes may serve as a wick for lamp or candle, particularly when dipped in oil, hence the old name 'Rush Lights' or 'Lamp Wick Grass'. In Greece, it was used as viticultural twine, and the seeds were boiled for use as a purgative.

In ancient Rome, poppets made of Rush were sacrificed to the goddess Mania. In a yearly sacrificial atonement, the fetishes were thrown into into the River Tiber from the Sublician Bridge. The ancient text *The Leyden Papyrus* mentions Rush leaves as a magical aid to dreaming:

> You write this on a rush leaf and you place it under your head; you go to sleep; then it makes dreams and it sends dreams. If you will do it to send dreams, you put it (the leaf) on the mouth of a mummy...

As the Rush is a plant continuously bathed in water, its kinship with dreams is intrinsic. However, most species of true rushes have leaves of extremely thin width, (making writing upon them no easy task), so perhaps some other plant is indicated.

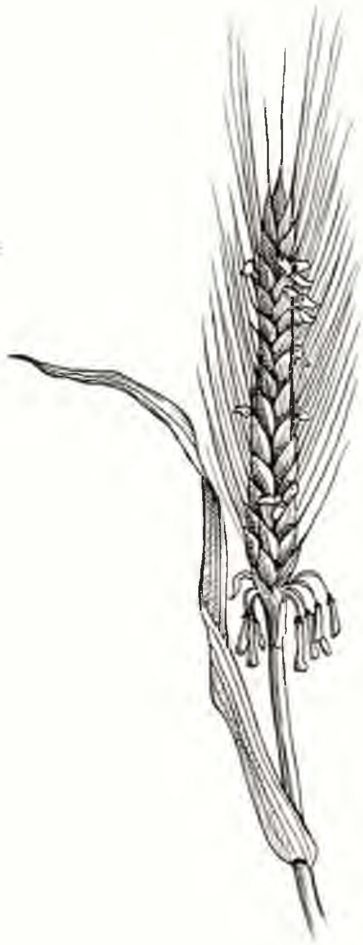
During the Chinese festival of Ta No, witches exorcised the old year's pestilences from the imperial palace, armed with brooms made of Rush. A Devonshire charm against thrush in infants used three rushes taken from a running stream. Each was passed through the baby's mouth, then cast in a stream against the current: as the moving water would carry away the disease.

Rye

Secale cereale
Poaceæ (Grass Family)

RYE is an annual grass grown as a cereal crop since at least Neolithic times and thought to originate in Anatolia. Glaucous in color during the growing season, it reaches a maximum height of 1.5 meters, and bears seeds, known as berries, in ears. The berry is harvested for use as flour, cereal, bread, and as a fodder crop. Generally, it tolerates colder temperatures than its cousin Wheat, and so is an important cultural and dietary part of northern latitude countries. Rye readily undergoes mashing and fermentation, and its arising distillate, once barreled and duly aged with care, becomes Rye whiskey, a rousing, autochthonous spirit of the United States and Canada.

Perhaps due to its association with the toxic and hallucinogenic Ergot fungus (*Claviceps purpurea*) which parasitizes it, and its alignment with the dread planet Saturn, Rye is associated with malevolent magic and cursing, such as hexing and blighting crops. According to the painstaking notes of one inquisitor during the period of European witch-persecution, one charm of malefic sorcery employed Rye, packed in the skin of a cat, along with oats, barley, and grapes, and placed in a spring for three days. The entire parcel was dried and ground to a powder, then distributed to the winds from a mountaintop in order to being sterility of crops and livestock on the surrounding districts. Though the source of this spell is certainly questionable, it lacks much of the hysterical components common in church reports of baneful magic, and contains certain elements of sympathetic magic which are, at the least, thought-provoking.



In Russia and Siberia, Rye was employed to make the destructive fetish known as the *Zalom*, used for causing mischief and blight to grainfields. The tops of the plant were twisted together, often with the hair of a horse or a woman, and sprinkled with stove-ash or graveyard dust. The power of the *Zalom* was so feared that bread made from a field so blighted would not be eaten, and the curse could only be broken by a priest or a *koldun* of greater power than the one who had cast it.

Rye straw is used for making the fetish known as the corn dolly, embodying the spirit of the crop at harvest.

SAFFRON

Crocus sativus
Iridaceæ (Iris Family)

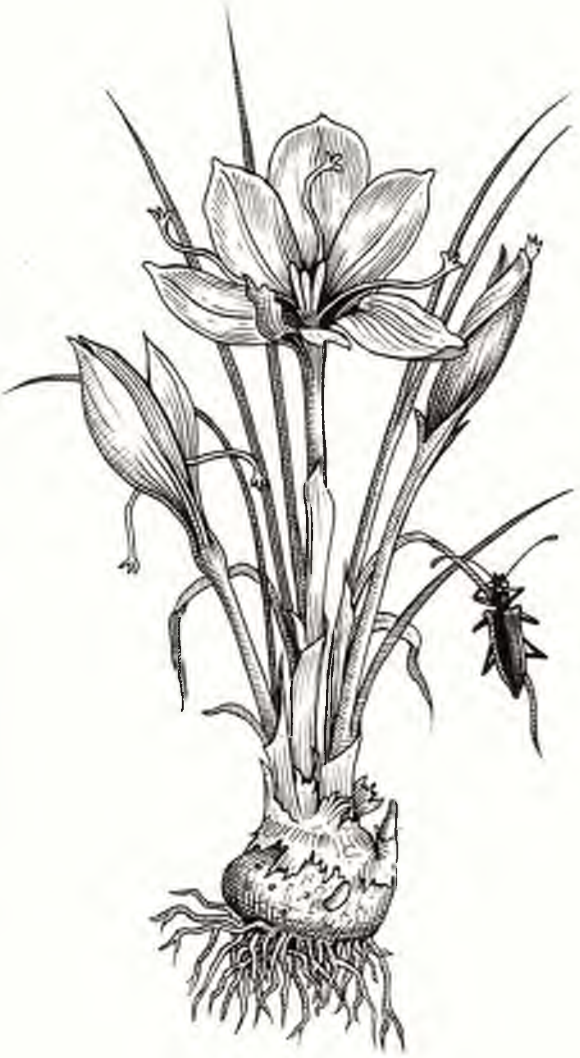
A GRACEFUL herb rising from a corm to 24 cm high, having a six-petaled, dusty pink or lavender flower with vermillion stigmas, which are the source of the commercial spice and the sacred dye in India. The sun-dried stigmas from approximately 3,500 Saffron flowers yield one avoirdupois ounce of the spice, depending on plant size.

As a traditional folk medicine, Saffron is anodyne, cordial, emmenagogue, and exhilarant; it has also been shown to have estrogenic effects. The Kahun Gynæcological Papyrus, dating to 1800 BCE, prescribes an abdominal unguent of Saffron oil and beer for the pains of a difficult labor. *Za'rafān* was a staple of Arabian magic and medicine and is still used today. In the cloistered laboratories of the European alchemists, it was known as Salefur. The eponymous compound Safranal ($C_{10}H_{14}O$), extracted from the stigmas, has shown antidepressant activity, both in laboratory study and psychonautics.

> *It is that the Earth answers with Crocus flame to*
> *the cloud on Ida;*
> *And the power of Athena in eternal life*
> *Is written by the light of the Asphodel on the*
> *Elysian fields.*
>
> JOHN RUSKIN
> *The Queen of the Air*, 1883

Saffron inhabits the dominons of the Sun and Venus, each of these principles balancing the other. In magic and ritual it is used in operations of Allure, Love, Summoning, Transmutation, and Marriage. Saffron has close associations with the deities Hermes and Thoth. In European stellar lore, the plant is aligned with the star Antares (α Scorpii).

Saffron is also an intoxicant, exhilarant and valued aphrodisiac; it was used in ancient times to enrich wine for use at wedding ceremonies. A highly auspicious charm for a Hindu Bride, Groom, or their parents, is a swastika of Saffron drawn on the feet. A similar charm for protection of the home employs a swastika of Saffron drawn over a carving of a lotus flower on the foundation stone of a house. As an amorous philtre, steep 10 stigmas in 250 ml of water; the stigmas may also be used alone, sublingually.



THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF SAFFRON

Hilarity, Agitation, Encouragement, Ascension,
Escalation, Accretion, Subsumption, Hospitality,
Marriage, Accord, Perfumed Sapience,
Charming Counsel, and Lifted Spirits.

In ancient magical literature, an incense found in *The Leyden Papyrus* to summon or reveal a thief employs powdered Crocus and Alum. Theophrastus reports a fragrant perfume much esteemed in antiquity made from Saffron. In the necromantic magical traditions of continental Europe, the *Grand Grimoire* specifies Saffron as the magical perfume of the tutelary angel Hanael. This luminary commands the spheres of amorous pleasure; its magical association reverberates in the flower's crystallization of the planetary principles of Venus. The grimoire *Almadel* specifies a planetary perfume for Jupiter consisting of Saffron, and Benzoin. In the grimore *De Nigromantia* attributed to Roger Bacon, an operation for creating the magician's ring engraved with the name TETRAGRAMMATON uses pure balsam and Saffron.

In Morocco, several folk magical charms employ Saffron. Spells used against the Evil Eye, and love charms, are written with Saffron, blood of a hare, and Moorish ink. In Moroccan funerary ritual, saffron water used to sprinkle the grave clothing.

SAGAPENUM

Ferula persica, Ferula szovitsiana

Apiaceæ (Dill Family)

NATIVE to Northern Persia, Sagapen is a historically attested umbelliferous plant producing an aromatic gum-resin used in medicine and magic. Though mentioned by Hippocrates and Dioscorides, as well as subsequent writers over the centuries, its precise botanical identity remains uncertain. Sources report it as a large, montane apiaceous plant to 2 meters in height, with glaucous stems, and a large, aromatic root. According to ancient descriptions, the gum took several forms; one was reported as a yellow transparent gum-resin, the other of a darker brown appearance not unlike Galbanum. In his *Theatrum Botanicum*, Parkinson was uncertain as to the plant's true identity, suspecting it was a species of *Thapsia*; later in the same work he mentions Sagapen as a contemporary adulterant of Laserwort.

It was used by the ancients to cure head-colds. Early modern druggists considered it kindred, but greatly inferior to Asafoetida, but this may be due more to their perplexity at the drug's true botanical origin. In the nineteenth century, two varieties were recognized, one which, when burnt, yielded an odor resembling garlic; the other variety, considered superior, resembled Galbanum.

The genus *Ferula* is associated with several plants producing gum exudates long used for magical incense, among them Galbanum, Asafoetida and Gum Ammoniac. Although its availability is now rare, Gum Sagapenum is associated with two plants:

Ferula persica (Persian Giant Fennel)
Ferula szovitsiana (Szovic's Giant Fennel)

Its magical use as an incense is associated with spirit-summoning and exorcism. Henry Cornelius Agrippa, in *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*, reports that an incense made from Gum Sagapen, juice of Hemlock, Henbane, Mullein, Red Sandalwood (*Pterocarpus santalinus*), and Poppy, makes 'spirits and strange shapes appear.'

SAGE, BLACK

Salvia mellifera

Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

AS a dominant species along the central coast of California, Black Sage proffers an unmistakable scent, especially in the summer, bearing notes of camphor, animal spoor, and strongly peppery, aromatic pinenes. In both the wet season and the dry, it is a valued medicinal ally for arresting phlegm and tempering minor complaints of the epigastrium. Its extracted essential oil is warming and spicy, and the flowers, leaves, stems, and seed capsules may all lend their virtue to incense. The resinous leaves and dried stalks may be used either alone, or as a vital component of incenses for rituals of strength and attaining success in action. In classical and early modern European occult literature, Black Sage is absent in attribution, but it readily conforms to plants aligned with the Sun and, to as certain extent, Mars. It readily adapts to the garden, so long as it is assured sun and relatively dry conditions; it serves well in xeric landscapes with other woody lamiaceae, as well as natives like Coast Live Oak (*Quercus agrifolia*), Sand Almond (*Prunus fasciculata*) and Woolly Blue Curls (*Trichostema lanatum*).

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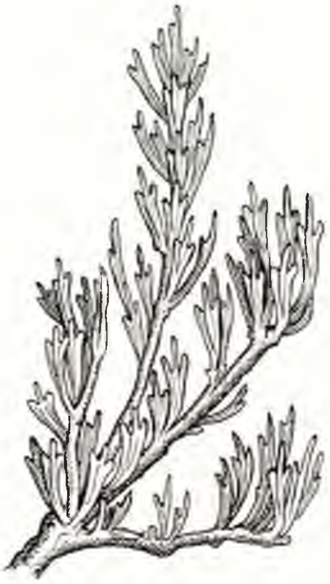


SAGEBRUSH

Artemisia tridentata, Artemisia spp.
Aﬆeraceæ (Sunflower Family)

THE term *Sagebrush* is applied to about 40 woody perennial *Artemisia* species, being hardy shrubs often inhabiting ﬆeppe and arid montane environments. Nearly all Sagebrushes are ﬆrongly fragrant, and are found in desert, chaparral, and coaﬆal dune communities. The 'Sage' part of its name refers to its aroma, as well as the gray-green color of its leaves; 'Brush' references its leaf texture and classification by some as 'scrub' growth. Sagebrushes are of no relation to True Sage, a plant from the Mint Family.

The beﬆ known of Sagebrush species is the Big Sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*), its native range extending across much of the Weﬆern United States. It is a shrub with gray, silver or pale gray-green foliage, its small leaves are tridentate, bearing three lobes at their tip. Its small yellow flowers give rise to a brown seed which has served as a traditional food for some indigenous Californians. Moﬆ Big Sagebrushes are juﬆ over a meter in height, though some magnificent specimens attain up to 3 meters. Much of the larger areas of the native range of Big Sagebrush have been reduced and disrupted by ranching, and agriculture, practices which have contributed to negative (and often unfounded) attitudes toward the plant. Iconic in the landscape, and prodigious in its sheer diversity of spiritual virtues, it is the greateﬆ native medicine of the American Weﬆ.

There has been the temptation by herbaliﬆs trained in the European tradition to impose the spiritual underﬆandings of both Sage (*Salvia officinalis*) and Wormwood (*Artemisia absinthium*) upon this plant, an unfounded and baseless prejudice. For example, in its native ﬆands, the average age of individual Big Sagebrushes can be 60 years, with some older than 120 years, and its wood can develop growth rings. Thus, purely on the basis of biology and ecology, Sagebrush should be regarded more as a tree than an herb, the latter carrying associations of gardens and agriculture. As with moﬆ trees in a foreﬆ or woodland setting, Sagebrush provides essential habitat for many animal species, some of whom, like the Sage Grouse, depend upon it for their life cycle.

Although found in the wild, Big Sagebrush can find a home, particularly in a permaculture xeriscape with well-drained soil and full sun exposure. For its spiritual presence, ecological value, and beauty in the landscape it is worthy of growing. It is drought tolerant and does well in Mediterranean climates, particularly planted in combination with *Arcﬆaphylos*.

Sagebrush can be toxic to humans when ingeﬆed. In minute doses it functions as a digestive, and in larger amounts as a vermifuge and abortifacient. However, any therapeutic use of medium to high dosage muﬆ be balanced againﬆ potential damage the plant's chemiﬆry can visit upon the liver and kidneys. The Kawaiisu peoples of California used A. *tridentata* as a traditional respiratory medicine, inhaling the fumes which arose from boiling the leaves: a profound cure, and considerably safer than oral ingeﬆion.

Its spiritual virtues align with the planetary attributes of the Sun. As used in ceremony and ritual, it possesses the powers of Beneficience, Blessing, Fertility, Protection, Oblation, and Exorcism. Overall, it is a provider of sanctity and goodness, both to the body and the spirit.

Native American nations utilized various species of Sagebrush as a cleansing bath, sometimes following the Sun Dance. It was also burned at the beginning of ceremonies. The Navajo used it to 'rid the body of undesirable things'. Both the wood and leaves are aromatic when burned.

The plant is also a source of color. Juice of the fresh plant may yield various tints for ﬆaining and dye, some of which require little mordanting. Ash from *Artemisia campeſtris* ssp. *caudata* was used by the Ramaha Navajo for blackening ceremonies, and Na-Ka-Ho-Sait or Fringed Sagebrush (*Artemisia frigida*) yields a green dye. The flowers of various Sagebrushes are also ready sources of color.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF SAGEBRUSH

Sanctuary, Stewardship, Resiliency, Sufferance, Resolution, Dissipation, Decontamination, Disavowal, Bitterness, Pungency, Stern Counsel, Empowered Solitude, and Holy Balsam.

SAGE, GARDEN

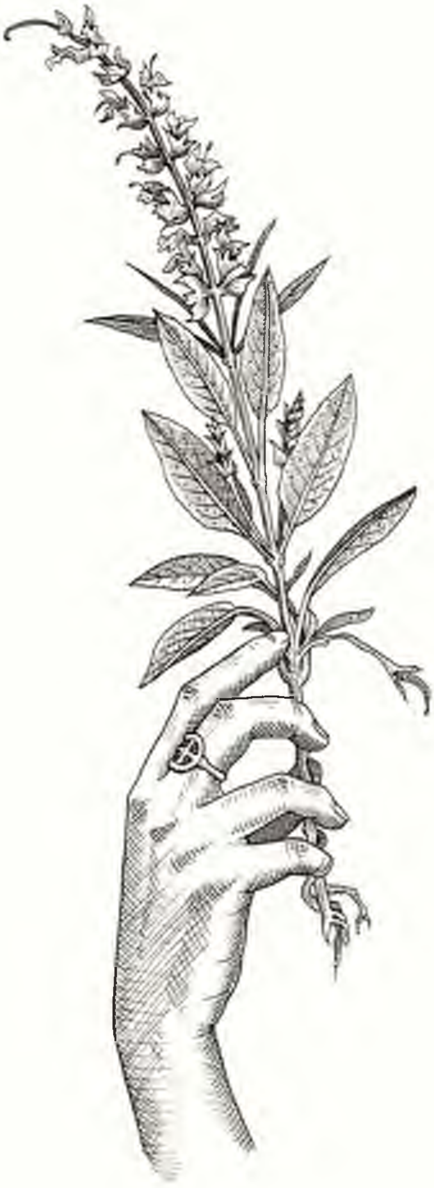
Salvia officinalis

Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

HERBA SACRA, as Garden Sage is also known, is an aromatic sun-loving perennial herb growing to juſt over one meter in height, by preference thriving in a dry, well-drained and sandy soil, and having oval, glaucous leaves and blue or purple flowers. Native to the Mediterranean, it is now extensively cultivated in gardens worldwide for culinary use. Numerous cultivars exiſt, some with gold or purple leaves, all virtuous. There are about 1000 species of *Salvia*, which means 'healing plant'; moſt of them are aromatic and have showy flowers.

It has been used in folk medicine as a diaphoretic, anti-inflammatory, diuretic, antiseptic, nervine, hepatic, hypertensive, ſtomachic, anticonvulsant, ſtypic, antidepressant, and tonic. Sage tea remedies coughs, colds, headaches, fevers; and is excellent for those conditions where both the ſtomach and upper respiratory syſtem are hassled. Common Sage is an eſteemed topical medicament for eruptions of the skin, as a hair tonic, and to ſtaunch blood flow from wounds. Sage may also be used as a tonic for the mouth, teeth, and gums. Drunk as a ſtrong infusion, the tea is also a reſpectable ſtimulant.

The aromatic charateriſtics of Sage are warm, green, resinous, and mildly spicy; it combines well with a diversity of fragrances including green, camphoraceous, woody, floral, and earthy notes. Sage-water may be freely splashed on the face, or sprayed from an atomizer, to allay melancholy. Folk herbaliſts have also used the tea as a brain tonic for improvement of the memory. Large doses should be avoided during pregnancy. A tonic elixir favoured by King Charles II conſiſted chiefly of spirits of wine, human skull filings, and Sage. The herb contains thujone, the gnoſtic-visionary virtue found also within Wormwood, and its concentration in the leaves is greateſt in late spring.



A POTION TO CURE INSANITY

When a man becomes insane, take daisy, field southerwood, and sage, digeſting it in wine, and let the patient drink it for fifteen days.

The Physicians of Myddfai

Varied traditions consider Sage to be an herb especially allied unto women: in some parts of Europe, a Sage plant thriving near a home indicates that the woman is the dominant partner in the marriage. Common Sage growing near a business, by its health will portend good or ill fortune at that business. If the plant flourishes, so will the merchant.

The Spirit-Retinue of Sage

Salvation, Brightness, Sobriety, Aid, Sagacity,
Clarity, Warmth, Torrefaction, Sanguinity,
Steadfast Beauty, Heartening Counsel,
Aroused Inspiration, and
Solemn Beatitude.

The peculiar arrangement of aromatic compounds, and their compatibility with many other plants, contributes to Sage's alliance with the planetary aspects of Jupiter. Its fire is moderated: sustaining, rather than destroying; its dryness stands firm against fleshly rot without mummifying. Sage exemplifies the strongly protective 'green' aspects of the group of plants known as the Woody Lamiaceae and has corresponding powers in magical use. Spanish and Portuguese charms to dispel the Evil Eye utilize both Sage and Rosemary, which are members of this group.

Sage may form an effective contribution to philters brewed specially for oracular and clairvoyant work, and aids in creative reveries. A decoction of medium strength, taken in small quantities, serve as the means of establishing individual efficacy. A strong decoction may be used as a bath toward the same purpose. Aphrodisiac properties have also been attributed to it, a battery of powers suggested by the presence of chlorogenic acid ($C_{16}H_{18}O_9$); this refracts a portion of the plant's secondary Venusian character.

A potent working of Mexican *Brujeria* creates a love-talisman employing Sage and Rue. The two herbs, along with the hair of the beloved, are boiled in a pot of wine, along with a coin. The coin, thus ensorcelled, must then be used to touch to the skin of the heart's desire. An old weather-charm causes a rainstorm by burying Sage leaves; as they rot, the clouds grow heavier.

A Hoodoo charm from Maryland to prevent the entrance of a magical malefactor into the house employed spreading Sage leaves over the door sill and covering them with a carpet. After the leaves were picked for the spell, they were prepared magically by having certain of the Ten Commandments read over them, such as 'Thou Shalt Not Steal.' This magical barrier was so potent it was said to stop a witch mid-step.

A suffumigation-spell of Virginian folk magic employed Sage, together with Asafœtida, Cayenne Pepper, sulfur, and seeds of Mustard wrapped in a toad-skin and burnt to release a victim from bewitchment. In England, it held some repute as a funerary herb; a custom endured in Hampshire of planting Sage on graves.

CORRESPONENCES

Powers: Vitality, Healing, House Ward, Potentiation, Enchanted Speech, Longevity, Immortality, and Lust.
Planet: Jupiter, Sun.
Element: Air.
Stars: Spica (α Virginis).
Zodiacal: Aries.
Domain: Herb Garden.
Divine Appellation: Herba Sacra.
Alchemical Concept: Liquor Salis.
Body Part: Immune System.
Corporeal Action: Tonic.
Therapeutic: Soteriology.
Affliction: Despair.
Embodied State: Homeostasis.
Emblem: A robed monk gathering plants from a physic-garden.

Sage Nectar Nostrum

❡ As hummingbirds can attest, Sages are prolific nectar producers. Each *Salvia* species produces an idiosyncratic nectar harboring unique flavors and degrees of sweetness, as well as spiritual signatures. Likewise, the flowers of individual species vary widely in the quantities of nectar produced, and each blossom may yield anywhere from a fraction of a drop to 3 drops or more. While the flavor may be similar to the scent produced by the flower, it frequently is entirely different. The exhilarating qualities of these nectars may be enjoyed raw from the flower or may be captured in the form of a tincture, to be used as a means of enjoyment, mediation, and spiritual connectivity with the plant.

The tincture begins by harvesting the flesh flowers, best done in the morning, before noon. Each blossom is carefully pulled out at its base and separated from the calyx. Often a singular gliſtening drop of nectar will be observed at the end where the flower has broken off. Without washing, place the flowers into a clean glass vessel. When the vessel is lightly packed with flowers, fill with light, young brandy or uncasked spirits of wine, being 30–40 percent alcohol by volume, so that the liquid juſt covers the top of the plant material. Seal the vessel and set aside in a dark place. Every other day, add more fresh flowers to this liquid, making sure that all plant material ſtays below the surface of the liquid. The flowers' delicate tissues will rapidly compress in the alcoholic menſtruum, leaving room for adding more. Repeat the process several times more, then seal the mixture and allow it to reſt for 60 days in a dark, cool place. Press out the liquid, ſtrain and reserve in UV-protected glass bottles.

As the flower's natural sugars are generally sufficient to sweeten the tincture, neither honey nor syrup should be added. The dose is 10–30 drops on the tongue. Favorite species I have used for this preparation are *Salvia gesneriflora*, *S. spathacaea*, and *S. africana-lutea*. The recipe may be used with *Salvia sclaraea* for a slightly ſtupefying effect.

SAGE, WHITE

Salvia apiana

Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

A SHRUBBY herb inhabiting the weſtern deserts of North America, growing to 2 meters, and having white, woolly leaves and ſteams, with inflorescences of white to pale purple. In folk medicine, it is a febrifuge, galactagogue and a fine gargarism. It is one of the moſt drying of the Sages and is therefore a valued tea for allaying the mucosal symptoms of colds and nasal infections.

Its plant-powers are Purification, Beneficence, and Excorcism. Proper ritual use of White Sage proceeds from the ancient spiritual traditions of a number of indigenous California peoples, including the Chumash, Cahuilla and Diegueno. Its power is chiefly derived from the thick, spicy, assertive smoke it produces when smoldered, either bound with ſtring as a bundle of leaves, or loosely burnt. Protective and consecratory in nature, White Sage, in the form of a smudge, is used to sanctify ceremony and empower prayer. The smoke is also traditionally used to turn away evil, cleansing a person or household of noxious influences.

Because the plant may be grown with ease, it should be sought from a nursery and grown in one's own garden, avoiding incursion and harassment of native populations. It thrives in the xeric landscape, and after eſtablishment with a minimum of water, quickly asserts its presence with a kind of quiet nobility. Even if it is not being grown for incense or medicine, its presence in the garden is at once serene and benefic. I group it with its natural ally Sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata*) as well as other glaucous, fragrant herbs of dry habitat such as Wormwood, Ditttany of Crete, Rue, Timo Arbuſtivo (*Thymus captiatus*), Desert Lavender (*Hyptis emoryi*) and Coyote Mint (*Monardella villosa*). Plants grown under such conditions can reach considerable ages for a *Salvia*, and develop thick, woody trunks.

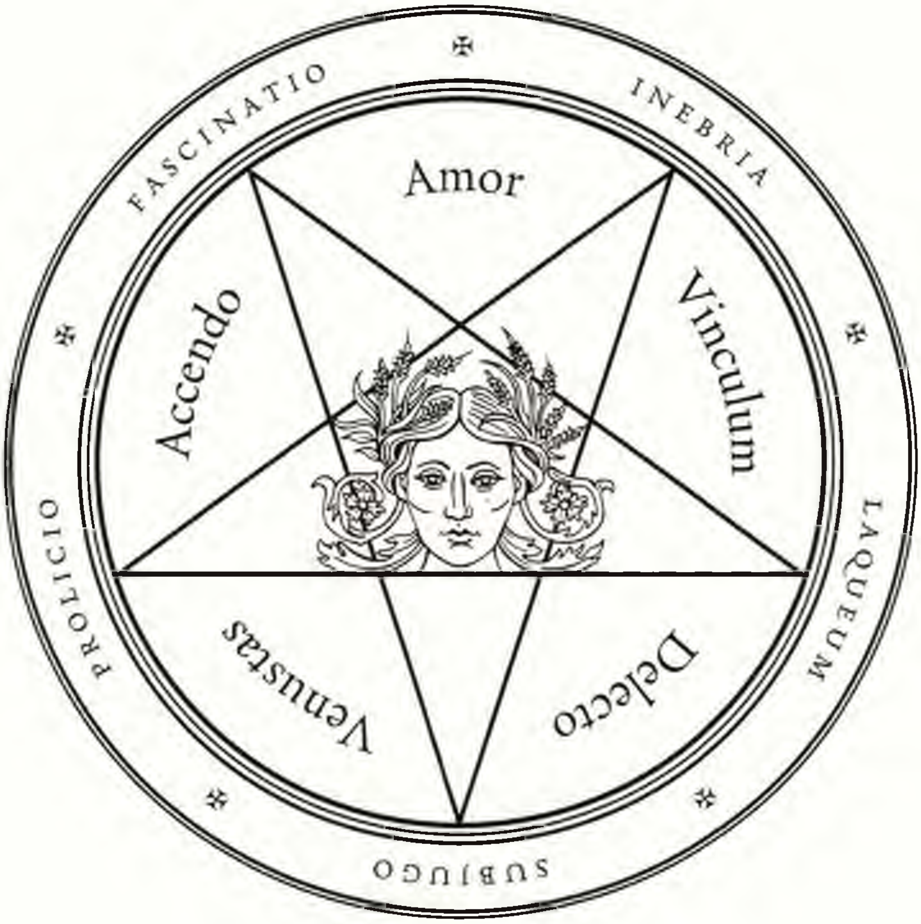
During its flowering phase, the pungent resin may be collected merely by handling the plant. This odorous and heady exudate may be scraped from the skin in the same manner as hashish from Cannabis. It may then be dried, burned as incense, tinctured in alcohol, or combined with other adjuncts for compound fragrances. It also makes a fine salve for the skin, particularly in combination with Wormwood and other thujone-containing plants.

SALEP

FROM the Arbaic *sahlab*, it is a name given to dried tubers of several types of Orchid, sometimes used magically in whole form, sometimes ground into a flour to produce a nourishing beverage. It also was the name for a drink prepared from these orchidaceous tubers, popular in Turkey. The three main species for Salep-drinking in Europe were *Orchis mascula*, *Orchis masculata* and *Orchis latifolia*.

Similar drinks, often aphrodisiac in nature, were made in ancient times; Dioscorides records that women in Thessaly would make a goat's milk Salep with the full, new tuber of a teſticular Orchid should they wish to incite desire. If their will was to discourage desire, the concoction was made with the withered, older tuber.

> *It is an excellent Reſtorative, to be given to persons waſted after long illnesses, the beſt Way is to put*



> *a small Quantity of it in powder, into a Bason of warm Water, which it instantantly turns into a Jelly, and a little Wine and Sugar are to be added. The Turks use it as a Provocative to Venery: the take it dissolved in Water, with Ginger and Honey.*
>
> JOHN HILL
> *The Useful Family Herbal*, 1770

Due to a resurgence in popularity of Salep drinks, wild orchids furnishing the tubers are overharvested, and certain species are either extinct in the wild or gravely endangered.

Leaves and Flowers to Sway the Flesh

CONSIDERATIONS OF THE APHRODISIAC

HUMAN Sexual attraction is an infinitely complex algorithm, and together with herbs of exorcism and fertility charms, *love philters* comprise perhaps the most widespread magical usage of botanicals. More commonly these are known as aphrodisiacs, agents that increase sexual desire. The classification is applied to plants in a number of ways.

Sometimes, a plant and its chemical virtues produce warming or stimulating effects, increasing blood flow, which generally relates to elevated sexual desire, such as Capsicum. Others are more direct and systemic in action, relying on complex aromas to engender arousal, such as Rose, Musk Seed or Vanilla. These features may be captured in ritual, ceremony and fetish to further their effects upon the body. In the magical plant traditions of French Polynesia, for example, male flowers of the *Hala* Pandanus are woven into the sacred *lei* garlands and placed around the necks of the unwary. Their beguiling smell, according to tradition, relaxes inhibitions in a similar manner to alcohol.

It is important to distinguish the ethnobotanical approach to an aphrodisiac from the magical one. Just because a thing was reckoned or used as a sexual stimulant does not mean that it worked well, or that is worked broadly for all who used it. Indeed, arousal can be triggered by any number of non-sexual stimuli, or by sensory agents which are not chemical in origin...a song, for example. Still, even the associations borne by use and attribution are worthy of study, as they reveal aspects of the plant and the human culture that developed a relationship with it.

Sometimes, association between a plant and its aphrodisiac quality is derived from its shape, following the old Doctrine of Signatures. Plants with bulbs, corms, sensuous orifices or fleshy protuberances were reckoned as reservoirs of erotic power, as their appearance suggested human sexual engorgements. In this chain of association, the magical quality of the plant serves as a visual *emblem* or *key*, first affecting the body not through any chemical principle but by arousing first the mind, which in turn enflames the body. Here, we naturally think of the Peach, or perhaps the phallic Cynomorium. Although the latter has shown some minor activity in animal studies, and more research is needed to verify it, we can assuredly attribute both plants' aphrodisiac purview to their power as visual emblems, and providers of sensual tantalization.

Finally, a modern constriction of the meaning of aphrodisiac, driven by industrial science, is that it solely refers to an agent that compels sexual desire in the otherwise uninterested, or the purely physiological definition that applies to treating erectile dysfunction. With the first definition, we think of poisoning, criminal activity, and the violation of another's will, the purview of *Datura* species. With the latter rubric, Yohimbe and Damiana, used judiciously, answer the need.

SALVIA

WITH about 950 recognized species, Salvia, or the True Sages, is the largest genus in the Mint Family. Where Sages have evolved, their remarkable spiritual powers have been acknowledged by man and woman, generally for their purifying powers, hence their generic appellation as a savior. In considering the whole of the genus, the following additional magical properties are also attested, although some are present rarely, and limited to only a few individual species:

Banishing
Hunting Charm
Purification
Protection from Evil Spirits
Love-Charm
Visonary Sacrament

Overall, the material characteristics of Salvias tend to include showy flowers, preference for well-drained soil and a tendency toward longevity notable for a lamiaceous herb, often becoming woody over time and developing small 'trunks'. Salvia species frequently have spicy leaves, though there are some whose scent is exceedingly subtle. Many are valued culinary or perfumery aromatics, or were burned for their fragant smoke, such as Blue Sage (*Salvia dorii*), which was used by the Kawaiisu Indians as a purifying smoke and to keep ghosts at bay.

SANDALWOOD

Santalum album

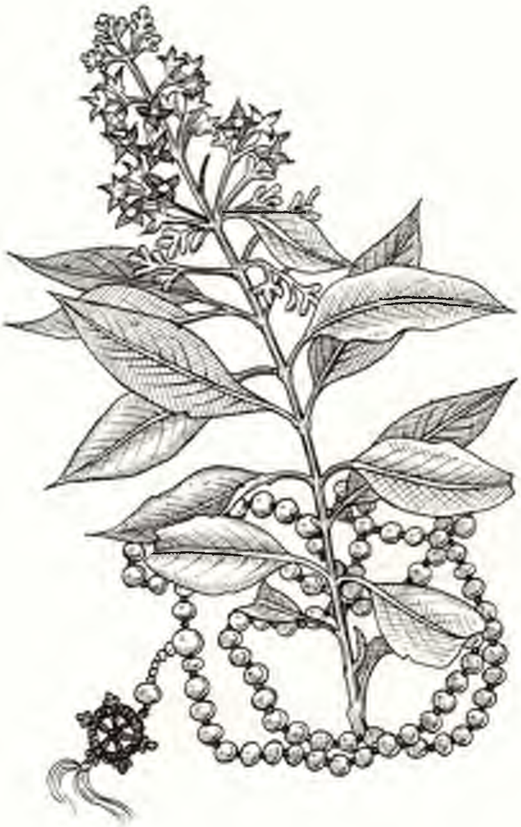
Santalaceæ (Sandalwood Family)

TRUE Sandalwood is a slow-growing tree endemic to the dry tropical forests of India and Southeast Asia, reaching 9 meters in height, with lanceolate leaves, and small red bisexual flowers. The fruit is a small, slow-ripening back drupe. Ecologically, it is a hemiparasite, vampirizing other species for nutriment, including its own; it has botanical kinship with European Mistletoe, with which it shares a botanical family. The tree is best known for its aromatic wood and essential oil, the demand for which is so great that, in theory, it is government regulated. The species stands as an exemplar of the wages or greed and unwise human exploitation, as its once-grand forests have been ravaged for the sake of its perfume. Sandalwood is also known in India by the name *Chandan*, while Europeans once referred to it as *Sanders*; the ancient Akkadians knew it as *Elammaku*.

In planetary correspondence, it is aligned with Jupiter and Venus. Its chief occult powers are Oblation, Meditation, and Potentiation. It is also found in rituals of Healing, Exorcism, Wealth, Beneficence, and Necromancy. It is also a funerary plant, and in China and India, ritual use of Sandalwood is associated with death-cults.

In India, the perfume is used in religious ceremonies for purification, removal of sins, and alleviation of sorrow. It is also known as a favored offering to Siva. Its heartwood, known in Hindi as *Safed Chandan*, is valued as an aphrodisiac in the Ayurvedic traditions of health and medicine.

> Lovely maidens bringing spices and flowers spoke and sang and looked bewitching. Women with full breasts and lovely tresses took with them sandal-paste, frankincense, perfumes and powders.
>
> *Cilappatikāram*
> 2nd century CE



Sandalwood has also featured in forms of coercive sorcery. A Coptic spell of 3rd or 4th century Egypt invokes Hekate with sandalwood cakes to prevent a man from sleeping:

> 'Phorba phorba breimō azziebua.' Take bran of first quality and sandalwood and vinegar of the sharpest sort and mold cakes. And write his name upon them, and so hide them, saying into the light the name of Hekate, and 'Take away his sleep from so-and-so,' and he will be sleepless and worried.

OTHER SANDALWOOD SPECIES

Australian Sandalwood (*S. spicatum*) is harvested for its aromatic oil, though like *S. album* it has been overharvested. Despite government management, the wild tree population is in decline.

A tree known as 'Iliahi (*Santalum freycinetianum*) is endemic to the mesic forests of Hawai'I, found on slopes and occasionally in wet forest. It is prized in the ethnobotany of the islands, its fragrant heartwood producing a high quality essential oil, and was used in treating dandruff and skin lesions, and for virtuous perfumes, some of which are used for traditional *tapa* cloth. The tree is currently listed as a vulnerable species. The basal hardwood was also used for carving religious statues, musical instruments, and canoe paddles.

Leaves of another Australian species known as Burardu (*S. lanceolatum*) were burned as a suffumigant for those beginning long journeys, in order to bring them strength and endurance. The same was used as a fortifying smoke for infants, and to repel pestilent insects.

Yet another Australian species, Desert Quandong (*S. acuminatum*) is an important bushfood producing both an edible kernel and fruit, the latter of whose taste is reminiscent of Peach. Its wood is prized for working and carving but is not aromatic.

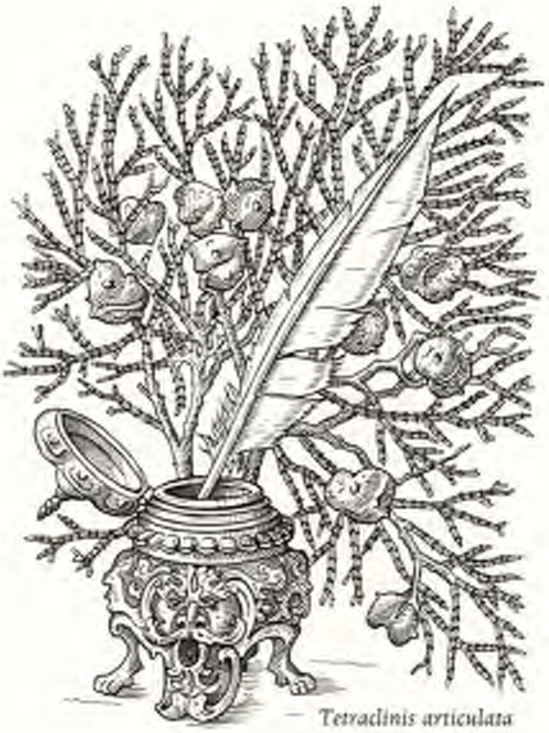
SANDARAC

Tetraclinis articulata

Cupressaceæ (Cypress Family)

SANDARAC is the aromatic resin of the Arar Tree, a small xerophytic conifer related to Cypress and Juniper, originating in and growing wild in the mountains of northwest Africa, Malta, Spain, and sporadically in Tunisia. It reaches a height of 10 meters and attains a characteristic pyramidal silhouette. Its scaled leaves are reminiscent of both *Thuja* and *Cupressus*, while its unusual cones resemble those of both *Cuprressus* and *Juniperus*. In Alchemy, *Sandarach* denotes realgar, or sulfide of Arsenic, from the Greek *sandaracha*, and though this usage is unrelated to the plant product, it does reference the resin's lustrous quality.

The arboreal resin, also called Sandarac or Gum Sandarac, is obtained by incisions in the trunk and branches. This releases the viscous sandarac resin, which solidifies upon exposure to air, forming pale yellow resin tears. In former times the trunks were incised for the collection of resin, but due to modern legal protections imposed on harvest, only stems may be incised.



Tetraclinis articulata

Sandarac is used in perfumery as a fixative in woody perfumes, pine fragrances, incense or oriental bases. The essential oil is obtained either by steam distillation or with various solvents; it has a fresh, resinous and slightly balsamic odor. Pounce, or powdered Sandarac, was sometimes mixed with ground cuttlefish bone and pumice, then applied to paper when writing with a quill pen to fix the ink and prevent smearing. In commerce, the resin is sometimes adulterated with the less-expensive Mastic. The ancient Romans used the tree's wood, known as Thyine, in the construction of temples. Thyine was mentioned as a precious commodity in *The Book of Revelations*, one of the many fineries borne forth by the Whore of Babylon. Dense, fragrant, and resistant to woodworms, this wood was used for some of the finest furniture of the ancient world. In making mummies, the resin was one of a select pharmacopeia of botanical materials used in ancient corpse-preparations. The gum also provides a valuable varnish.

The Arar tree has had some use in folk medicine as a topical agent to treat hemmorhoids; it also is known in India as a remedy for diarrhea, though if too much is taken internally, it can quickly turn and become a wretched gastrointestinal poison. Hippocrates recommended it for curing ulcers.

Its powers in magic are summoning, illumination, and purification. It dwells among the herbs of Saturn, though its characterology, when tempered, may assume the station of Mercury, stimulating the mind, and serving to inspire. As an incense, the fumes of the burning resin, if too thick, have a character of acridity that may eclipse its balsamic nature; it is therefore used sparingly for Mercurial works, and in greater amounts for the more ponderous work of the God of Time.

The fragrant resin was highly valued by the ancient Greeks and Romans as a temple incense. An ancient Greek suffumigation for driving away scorpions, reported in the *Geoponika*, used an admixture of Sandarac resin, Galbanum, and goat fat. A vision-producing incense from one book of Islamic magic is compounded from Sandarac, golden talc, Beard-grass resin, wax, and Saffron. In modern Morocco, Berber usage of the smoldered gum resin (*Amedzzi*) combined with Mastic is a powerful purificatory smoke on Midsummer day. Suffumigations of the gum are feared by the jinn.

SASSAFRAS

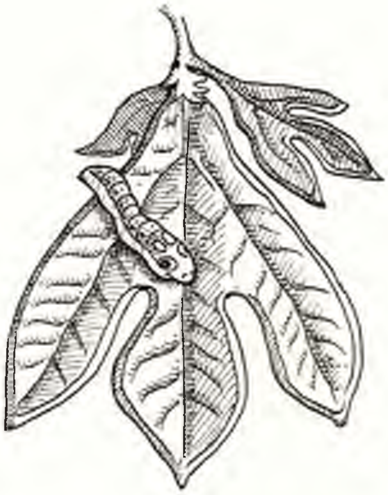
Sassafrass albidum

Lauraceæ (Laurel Family)

SASSAFRAS is a North American tree growing to 20 meters, with spongy, aromatic wood of an orange or reddish-brown color, and fragrant leaves of a distinct 'ghost' or heart shape, native from Southern Ontario to the Southeastern United States. Answering to the folk-names of both *Sassafrax* and *Ague Tree*, it arises from the Laurel Family, whose trees are known for their evergreen leaves, stately beauty, Solar correspondence, nobility and aromatic puissance. Its dried leaves are essential in Creole cuisine where they form the basis of filé, the spice mixture crucial for gumbo; the scent of its root bark is a predominant note in the taste of commercial root beer.

In magic and ceremony, it has traditionally been used for operations of healing, arousing sexual attraction, and prosperity.

In the discipline of natural pharmacy, its properties are identified as antidepressant, diuretic, stimulant, diaphoretic, and carminative. The tree has some repute in folk medicine as an effective antidote for skin complications, gout, menstrual pain and irregularity, and kidney complaints. Historically, the Ojibwa employed the boiled root pulp in the role of narcotic. Sassafras had a great reputation against malaria; Spaniards imported it from the Americas and carried bits of the tree in the pocket as a talisman against disease.



Chemically, its principles arise from a complex tessellation of safrole, pinene, thujone, phellandrenes, pinene, and camphor. The essential oil is also occasionally available, and should be used with caution, if at all. Internal use of essential oil of Sassafras should be avoided, as even small amounts have been known to cause death. Nonetheless, in folk magic the essential oil is still used to anoint the purse or wallet to ensure that a steady supply of money will be drawn thereto. Likewise, one may annoint cash before spending it to assure it is speedily replaced.

The spongy bark of the root is richest in virtue, but the root-wood, and that of the stem, are also of value. A tincture is easily made from the root bark. In this form, the medicine is potent and aromatic, but its quality does not endure long; suspended organic material precipitates out of solution after about two years and there is a noted degradation in aroma. In some areas of North America, grocers offer shelf-stable Pappy's Sassafras Extract as a comestible, athough fresh root bark will always yield a more lively and aromatic brew. By law, this commercial preparation is safrole-free, as sassafras extractives have long been banned in the United States unless the offending compound is removed. Although safrole is considered a carcinogen, it is only one-fourteenth as carcinogenic as the ethanol in beer. For folk preparations, perhaps the finest use of the root bark is for perfuming lotions, skin washes and baths.

In multiple folk medical traditions, Sassafras has also been valued as an aphrodisiac. In Vodou, Sassafrass is sacred to to the *loa* Erzulie, which provides an occult window on the tree's charm, sophistication and allure. In addition, safrole, after being chemically altered through amination in the liver, gives rise to MDMA, well-known for its sensual and amorous effects upon the body, mind, and heart.

CORRESPONDENCES

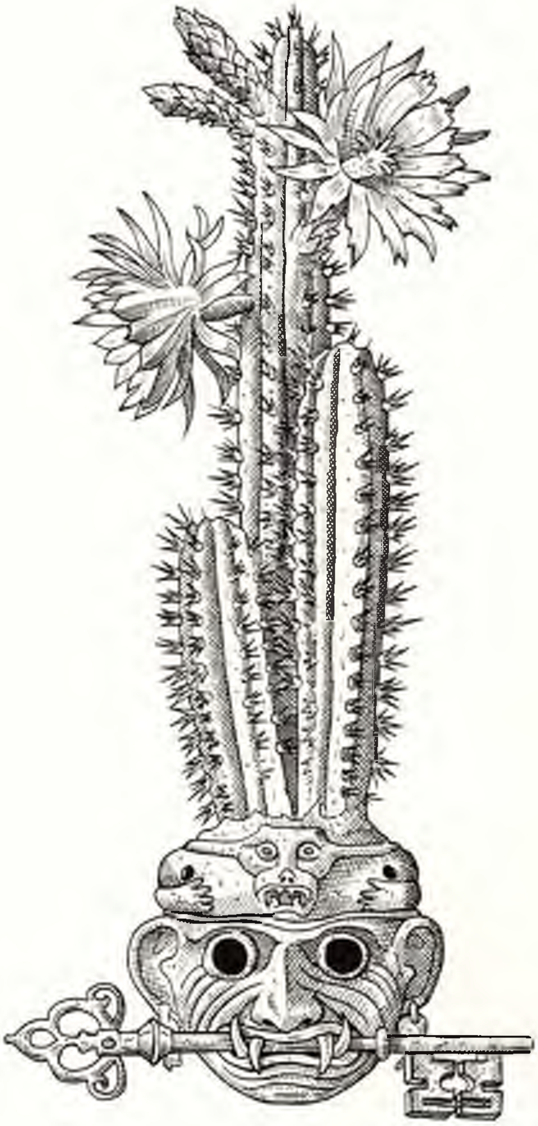
Essence: Allure.
Magical Powers: Wealth, Attraction, and Healing.
Planet: Venus.
Element: Water.
Body Part: Heart.
Deific Forms: Erzulie.
Chemical Virtues: Safrole.
Emblem: An open apothecary's jar, glazed in green, from which a spirit emerges holding a book of sacred scripture.

SAN PEDRO CACTUS

Echinopsis pachanoi
Cactaceæ (Cactus Family)

HUACHUMA, as San Pedro Cactus is also known, is a glaucous, columnar cactus native to Peru and Ecuador, and reaching 6 meters under optimum growing conditions. It is known by the folk names Cuchuma, Cardo, Hermoso. It was formerly classified as *Trichocereus pachanoi*, but has been subject to taxonomic revision; even in its former classification it was known to share close genetic affinity with genus *Echinopsis*. The cactus contains numerous alkaloids, the chief visionary one being mescaline, which is concentrated just beneath the skin. Many species of *Echinopsis* share the visionary qualities of San Pedro. Among these are E. *peruviana* and E. *lageniformis*.

In Andean ethnomedicine, the cactus is the central plant intelligence and ingredient of the *Cimora* brew, used as an intermediary of visionary healing. Fish, beans, spicy or greasy foods are abstained from for a day prior to use. Its human phytognostic use has been dated to at least 1300 BCE. Its namesake St. Peter, keeper of the keys to the gates of Heaven, serves as an emblem of the plant's visionary power.



Echinopsis pachanoi

As considered from the perspective of planetary correspondence, the cactus is aligned with both Solar and Lunar attributes, and as a plant ally, its teachings can proceed from either, or both realms. Its spiritual powers are Healing, Divination, Purification, and Triumph, though in Peru, the cactus is utilized for both malevolent and beneficent sorceries. An especial power of the plant is its action against 'bad air' and malevolent sorcery which has penetrated or otherwise affected the body negatively.

Some traditional sorcerers who employ San Pedro say that those varieties having 4 ribs are the most powerful in magic, the ribs representing the Four Winds and the Four Roads. Easily grown, it thrives in the garden and serves as visionary kindred, and surrogate for, the endangered Peyote. Sections of the cactus root readily and are often given as gifts between cactus stewards.

◆

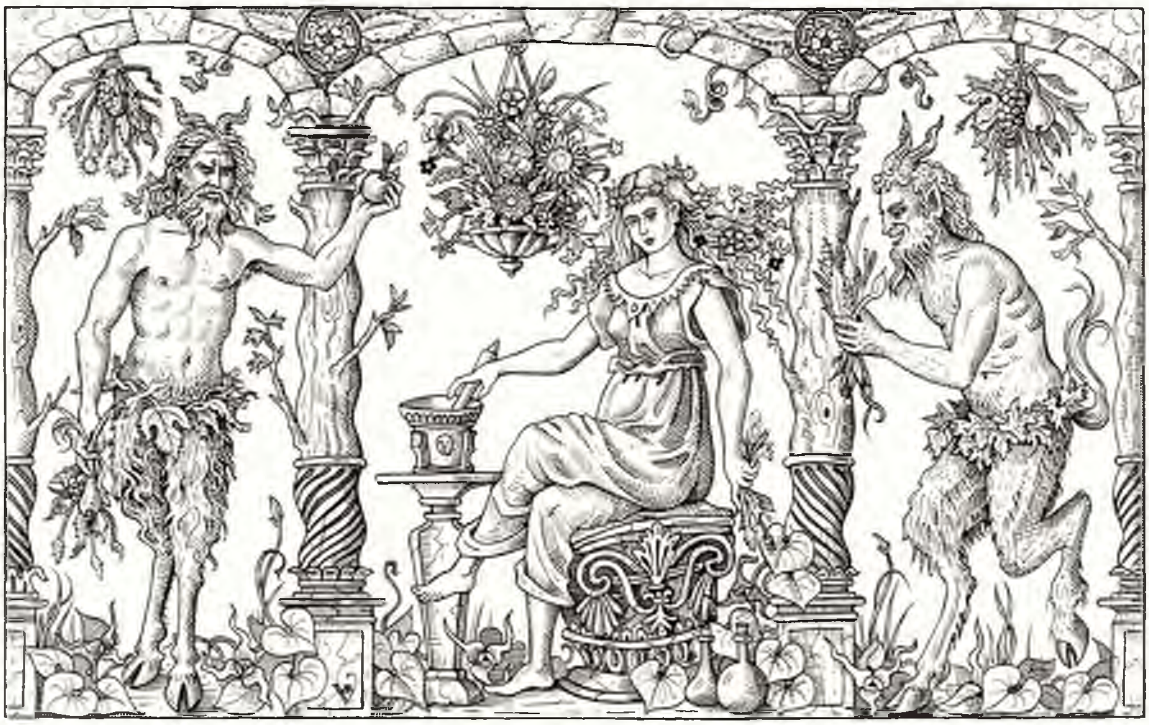
The bitterness of the cactus potion is unique, primordial and earthy. It seems to belong to the animal kingdom, rather than the plant. This intense flavor, one that most humans who encounter it are extraordinarily averse to, is both an essential feature of the plant's personality, and a test.

In addition to its augmentation of 'seeing', the cactus elevates the sensorium of touch, producing a sublime and pervasive tactility which may be experienced wholly by the Self, or extended into the environment like psychic filaments, into surrounding objects. Predictably, this can lead both to astonishment and trouble, but if respected, it offers great creative powers to the Artist.

When approaching the plant for visionary intercession, an essential quality is absolute humility before the spirit. If one brings it, revelation may proceed. If one brings arrogance or presumption, one will be made humble, by harrowing of the body, the soul, or both. Concealed under the mask of plant toxicology and aesthetics, this is in fact a simple and profound teaching of good etiquette, brought to humanity, from a plant.

The Spirit Retinue of San Pedro Cactus

Luminance, Enigma, Surrender, Grace, Disquisition, Agreement, Integration, Advancement, Remediation, Enhancement, Exploded Views, Corporeal Harmonies, Celestial Raiment.



SATYRION

SATYRION was thought to be the aphrodisiac food of the ancient satyrs. It was believed that those who ate the herb would be transformed into these rustic goat-people. In magical literature, it sometimes refers to a plant, often a species of Orchid due to the plant's ithyphallic and testicular erotomorphism. Other references to Satyrion indicate an aphrodisiac made from the same plant, or, more generally, a philtre of resonant properties. The aphrodisiac mentioned in the *Satyricon* of Petronius was thought to be a ragwort.

A Satyrion was also regarded as a local plant equivalent of the original, ancient botanical source. In India the Hathpanja orchid or Salam Panja (*Dactylorhiza hatagirea*) was used as a nutritive aphrodisiac, for seminal debility in men. In many places, including the British Isles, it was Early Purple Orchid (*Orchis mascula*), the tuber of which was powdered and used as the basis of love-potions.

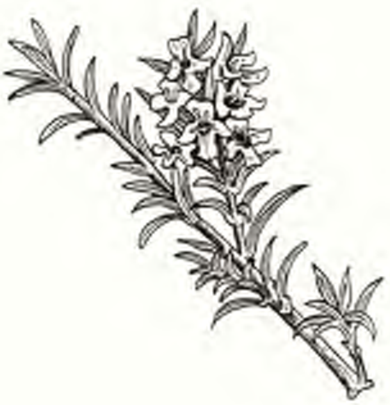
One medieval love spell employed Satyrion thus. A portion of the powdered root was first mixed with oil of musk and set aside. Then, during a nocturnal hour of Venus, three hairs were plucked from the sorcerer's body and laid on a piece of parchment measuring one by two inches. In red ink, the following was inscribed thereon:

GEDULAH
SHEVA
GEDULAH

Then, as each hair was placed on the parchment, the sorcerer incants:

By the Strength of the Emanation of Gedulah,
And the Glory of Sheva,
Let that of Mine
Be that of Thine.
By the Strength of the Emanation of Gedulah,
And the Glory of Sheva,
Let that of Thine
Be that of Mine.

The parchment and hairs were then annointed with oil of Sandalwood and burnt to ash. These ashes are then placed before a burnt incense offering. When the offering had been burnt entirely, the ashes of the parchment and the hairs were sealed in a container for a term of seven days. A pinch of the resulting powder was then added to the food or drink of the sorcerer's desired.



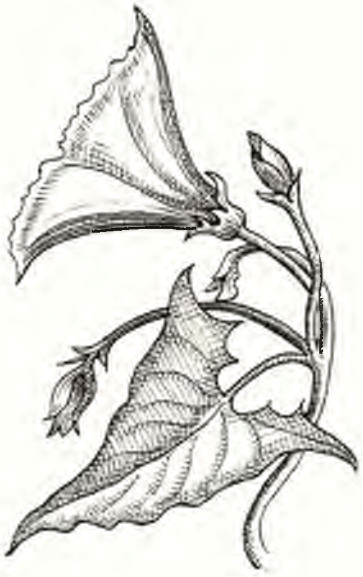
SAVORY

Satureja hortensis—Summer Savory
Satureja montana—Winter Savory
Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

THE genus *Satureja*, or True Savories, is comprised of about thirty species. The plants are usually prostrate herbs from 15 cm to 45 cm, both annual and perennial, and native to Southeastern Europe, the Middle East and the Mediterranean. Most members are aromatic and have whorls of pink or white flowers. They have long been prized for culinary use. It is one of the hottest and spiciest of the woody Lamiaceae, having a stimulating, but parching quality. For this reason, it is easy to use too great a quantity, and its use is best measured, or tempered by other herbs.

This herb and its virtues have, from antiquity, been associated with the lewd and rustic Satyrs; it is found as an ingredient in philters, and medieval recipes caution against its over-use as a seasoning due to its propensity for provoking lechery. Fresh sprigs, particularly when flowering, may be tinctured, or made into aphrodisiac cordials, its heat tempered by resinous fruits such as those of Myrtle (*Myrtus communis*). In Italy, bundles of dried Savory are hung in the home as talismans against the Evil Eye, and as a preventative against baneful and intrusive spirits.

A necromantic spell from the Byzantine grimoire *Hygromanteia* (*Codex Bononiensis 3632*) cites several magical operations for awakening a skull for oracular purposes; in one procedure, the bone was washed in a strong decoction of Thymbra (*Satureja thymbra*) and Feverfew, with magical characters and the names Batabel, Lesterou, Belial, and Oustiel written on the osseous vessel.



SCAMMONY

Convolvulus scammonia
Convolvulaceæ (Bindweed Family)

SCAMMONY is a bindweed native to Syria and Asia Minor, with sagittate leaves and pale yellow or cream flowers. It is the source of scammonia, the gum obtained by incision of the live root, and this fraction of the plant is valued medicinally as a drastic purgative. The best quality, when hardened in lump form, is a lustrous black color, and light gray when powdered. The whole root is more commonly available in dried, broken form, though is less desired for use in Art. The old medicinal compound of Scammony and Juice of Quince was known as *Diagridium*. When formerly a staple of pharmaceutical commerce, it was often adulterated with False Scammony (*Ipomoea orizabensis*), sourced from Mexico, and considered an inferior medicine.

> *This is a poison as well as remedy. In certain quantities it is useful, and in others it is fatal.*
>
> IBN WAHSHIYYA
> *Book on Poisons*, 950 CE

Its power in the magical art is Exorcism and Binding, but for the wrathful gods, and those of war, it is used for summoing. In this wise it is allied with Mars, by whose planetary aspects it governed. For these purposes, it is especially useful in incenses and powders; alcohol infused with the resin may be used as an exorcising wash for the interior of the home.

Paul Chriſtian, in his *Hiſtorie de la Magie, du Monde Surnaturel et de la Fatalité à travers les Temps et les Peuples*, details a magical ointment composed from Scammony, Opium, cod bones and tortoise shell, honey, beaver fat, and dew collected from poppies. After a laborious fermentation process involving excessive exposure to sun and darkness, the salve is then rubbed into the ſtomach, navel and neck, to provoke erotic dreams of women. An arcane formula from the ancient spell corpus *Papyri Graecae Magicae* describes a potion to cause “an evil sleep” included Scammony among its ingredients.

Scarlet Pimpernel

Anagallis arvensis

Primulaceæ (Primrose Family)

ALSO answering to the name of Shepherd’s Weather-Glass and Poison Chickweed, Scarlet Pimpernel is an annual, proſtrate herb of small proportions, with pale green hirsute leaves, and salmon-colored flowers bearing five petals. Some varieties bear flowers of red, and, less commonly, azure blue. It is governed in the firſt inſtance by Mercury, and in the second by Saturn; its elemental association is Air.

Medicinally, its juice has a reputation as a salve againſt ulcerous lesions; English Romany used the juice of the plant as an anti-inflammatory for ant and wasp ſtings, and as a general insecticide. Internal use results in severe nausea due to the presence of cyclamin, a triterpenoid glycoside. In many ranges and agricultural diſtricts, it is considered a noxious weed and is harmful to liveſtock.

In English folk magic, Scarlet Pimpernel is reckoned as a ſtrong power againſt witchcraft, especially after having been ritually gathered with a prayer invoking the Blood of Jesus, a reference to its flower:

Herb pimpernel I have thee found
Growing upon Chriſt Jesus’ ground;
The same gift the Lord Jesus gave unto thee,
When he shed his blood upon the tree.
Rise up, pimpernel, and go with me,
And God bless me,
And all that shall wear thee. Amen.

For greateſt efficacy, the prayer was repeated twice daily for fifteen days. Other lore holds that the plant may be used as a talisman to attain Second Sight.

Folklore recognized the plant as being able to move backwards againſt the current of a running ſtream, hence an innate power of being ‘apoſtate to Nature’. This reminds us of the toad, frog or cat-bone charms in folk-sorcery which behave in similar fashion, which are used for controlling animals, people or summoning the Devil. In combination with its crimson color, its virtues of poison, and its creeping habitus, this usurpation of the usual cosmic order aligns the plant with Samael, the fallen angel who taught the use of the forbidden fruit to Eve.

The Spirit-Retinue of Scarlet Pimpernel

Partition, Prophylaxis, Sangunity, Assuagement, Captivation, Subterfuge, Articulate Beguilement, Delicate Vehemence, Unacknowledged Blessing, Subdued Oſtentation, Empowered Presentiment, and Religious Sublimation.

In European ceremonial magic, the plant plays an important role in the 15–16th century text of sorcery *The Grimoire Almadel*. The juice of the plant is used, compounded with the blood of a mole, to quench the heated blade of the Sickle, or white-handled Knife of Art, during its consecration. This juice is expressed from the fleshy ſtems and unripe fruits, which muſt be crushed in great quantity. Where large quantities and a sufficiently ſtrong herb press are lacking, one may express the juices by pounding, using alcohol as a menſtruum, for which the following receipt is offered.

Liquor of Pimpernel

Scarlet Pimpernel, fresh: ſtems, leaves, flowers, and unripe fruits	50 g
Spirits of Wine, 30% ABV	90 ml

❡ The plant is pounded in a large mortar until a sodden paſte results; to this the alcohol is incrementally added until the whole becomes a slurry. The whole is then pressed, and a bright green liquid emerges. It may be ſtored for several days before use, but its greateſt virtue lies in immediate usage. Care should be taken to avoid accidental ingestion.

SCOPOLIA

Scopolia carniolica; *Scopolia* spp.
Solanaceæ (Nightshade Family)

A LESSER-KNOWN perennial European nightshade, growing to 50 cm high with brown-purple flowers, having leaves similar to *Brugmansia*, and a thick, distinctive rhizome. The genus is monotypic, having one accepted species, but morphological variations have prompted some to classify up to four species. Native to the temperate regions of Eurasia, particularly the eastern Alps and the Carpathians, it grows in shaded woodland and ravines at high altitudes. In Croatia, the herb has been a protected species since 1976.

Scopolia contains the tropane alkaloids L-hyoscyamine, L-scopolamine, hyoscine, cuscohygrine, tropine, pseudotropine, and chlorogenic acid. Its physiological influences on the body are as a cerebral sedative, and narcotic; some traditions maintain its anaphrodiasic principles, while other consider it aphrodisiac. The plant has enjoyed use in traditional Baltic medicine to ease the pains of childbirth.

This potent nightshade has enjoyed some limited use as a medicament for derangements of the mind and nerves, and to treat some of the symptoms of certain drug addictions. In the Middle Ages, the herb was used in folk medicine as a narcotic and an ingredient in love potions; it was also an important drug in Renaissance apothecaries. It was also used as a poison. The German plant writer Christian Rätsch reports that in Romania, the roots were used as a substitute for Mandrake.

The plant is dually aligned with Saturn and Venus, and its powers in magical usage are Attraction, Coercion and Love-Charming. In folklore, it is associated with sorcery of a licentious sexual nature, and its standing in the family of nightshades suggests it may have been, or could be, an ingredient in witches' flying unguents and brews.

In rural festivals in eastern Europe, Scopolia was used as a strewing herb. However, this was no typical strewing for the purpose of purification and disease-chasing: it was believed that those who danced over the leaves of the Scopolia plant would "be amenable to any type of sexual activity".

SEA BEANS

Fabaceæ (Pea Family)
Convolvulaceæ (Bindweed Family)

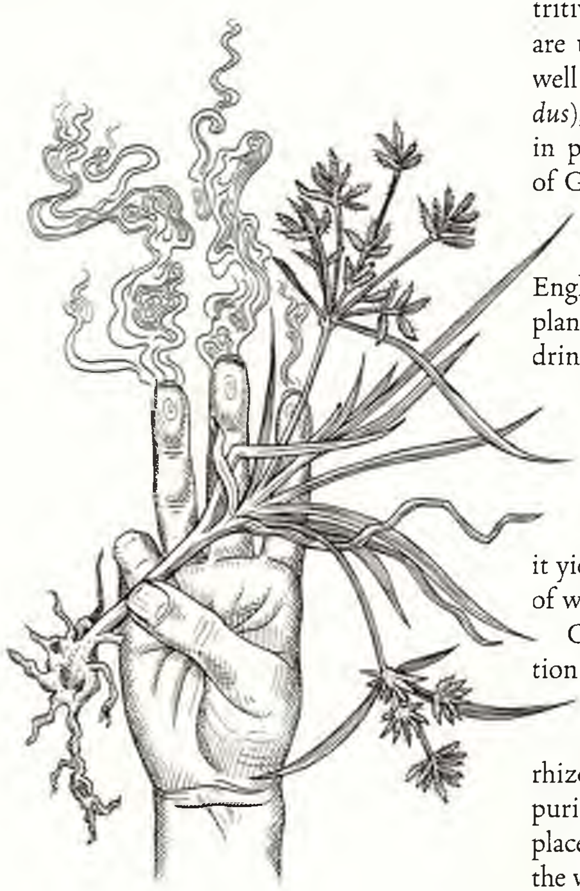
SEA Beans are the globular, smooth, sometimes heart or kidney-shaped seeds of about 10 tropical species of plant, found on beaches of the Gulf of Mexico and Western Europe, and as far north as the British Isles. They are known by a diversity of names including Molucca Beans, Sea Nuts, Strand Nuts and Fairy Eggs.

Belonging to a group of ocean travellers known as drift seeds, the beans range in color from tan to red to deep black, originating in the Caribbean and South America, and are carried by the Gulf Stream north through the Atlantic where they wash ashore. The convolvulaceous plant *Merrimia discoidesperma*, known as Mary's Bean and identified by a characteristic equal-armed cross, is one of the most common, and has the widest range. Other genera include *Guilandina* and *Entada* from the Pea Family. As recently as 2016, I collected several specimens of those known as Sea Hearts or Cœur de la Mer (*Entada gigas*) washed up along the Texas coast, which have long been prized there as lucky charms.

In coastal and maritime communities, a body of magical knowledge has sprung up around these curious ocean-wayfaring seeds, ranging from the power of good luck that the beans convey on their finders, to amuletic usages including protection from demonic forces and illness. A pair of the beans, carried in the left and right pockets, brings luck and protection, and is regarded as 'male' and 'female.' In certain areas the paler-colored beans are viewed as being more potent; such beans may be fashioned into necklaces for children as protection against fascination. According to some traditions, if someone casts the Evil Eye at a child wearing such a Bean, it was known to darken considerably in color.

The smooth roundness of the seed is suggestive of a woman's belly swollen with child. Historically, the sea-wise Cornish used such beans as magical charms to ensure safe childbirth; in the Hebrides, the Bean is known as the Kidney of Mary or Virgin's Nut, and used for kindred magic. The hardiness of the seed in weathering water, wind, reef and rock, combined with the long distances it travels intact, indicates its power as a wayfaring talisman, for the protection of travellers.

In considering the taxonomic origins of the Sea Bean, we may reflect upon the curious fact that the principal genera belong to the Fabaceae and Convulvulaceae, two plant families rich in psychoactive poisons. Indeed, one Sea Bean, *Entada rheedii*, heaving massive seed pods exceeding one meter in length, is known as the African Dreaming Tree, on the basis of the seeds' capacity to provoke vivid oneiric activity.



SEDGE

Cyperus spp.
Cyperaceæ (Sedge Family)

PROVIDING important plant materials for food, fiber, medicine and magic, *Cyperus*, the genus of nutsedges or galingales, contains 700 globally distributed species. Having long, grass-like leaf-blades, they are sometimes referred to as 'reeds'. Nearly all Sedges are aquatic, dwelling in bogs or sodden ground. Some, such as the Smooth Flatsedge (*C. laevigatus*), have adapted to dwell in extreme environments such as salt marshes, brackish or alkaline water, or in mineral springs; many Sedge species are invasive. The rhizomes, roots and root nodules of many *Cyperus* species are strongly aromatic, and exhibit considerable diversity in size, ranging from 5 cm. to 5 m. The plant found in many European herbals and magical texts is Galingale or European Sedge (*C. longus*). *Cyperus papyrus*, the Egyptian sedge from which papyrus was made, and from which paper gained its name, is for the most part now extinct in its native range.

Sedges, as used in Physic, are aromatic, nutritive, diuretic, and emmenagogue. Many types are used to disinfect and heal open wounds, as well as eye inflammations. Mustaka (*C. rotundus*), an aromatic Sedge from India, is valued in perfumery. Libyan folk medicine makes use of Giaad (*C. rotundus*) as a perfume, lotion and for hair care, as well as for various magical medicines. In the medieval formulæ of Old English leechdoms, Sedge was a frequently cited plant, including a recipe characterized as a "spew drink against the Devil." Sedge persisted in as a pharmaceutical in English pharmacopoeias well into the early modern era. Nagarmotha (*C. scariosus*) is a native Indian Sedge; despite its tendency to infest a wide variety of ecosystems, it valued for the aromatic oil it yields, known as Cypriol, with a scent redolent of wood and spice.

Generally, its magical uses encompass protection and cleansing, often in the form of a decoction of the whole plant, used to bathe the entire body, or the essential oil of the rhizomes of one of the various species. This purificatory aspect is mirrored in its habitat: in places where Sedges grow it is often observed that the water present there is clear, testifying to their function as purifiers. Other magical properties of Sedge include Enchanted Speech, Allure, and Success in Hunting. In some traditions of South American magic, the spirits of some Sedges are thought to be injurious to humans.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF SEDGE

Persuasion, Influence, Anchorage, Intransigence, Pervasion, Suffusion, Maceration, Filtration, Wallowing, Subterranean Murmurs, Haunted Margins, Serous Dominion, and Numinous Ferment.

Magical powers are associated with chewing the aromatic rhizome of a Brazilian species, commonly known as Danda-da-costa (C. *rotundus*). In Nigeria, sorcerers chew this same tuber to charm others with their words. This power of enchanted speech is entreated for favorable influence in courts of law. In the folk magic of Kenya, tubers of C. *esculentus* are masticated for their use as talismans.

Several East African species, particularly C. *alternifolius* and C. *kaessneri*, are used to make magical charms which increase body strength. In ancient Egypt, *Cyperus* species were used in some first millennium BCE formulations of the famous ritual incense *kyphi*, together with *Acorus calamus*, Aromatic Rush (*Adropogon schoenanthus*), Terebinth resin, Juniper, Frankincense, Honey, Cassia, Mint and Myrrh. In Italy, C. *longus* is known as Giùnku fèmmina, and its reeds are used to make traditional brooms.

SENNA

Senna spp.

Fabaceæ (Pea Family)

A SHRUB of mostly worldwide tropical distribution, growing to 1-2 meters in height, with yellow flowers. Its fruits are long, typically legume seed pods containing 4-6 seeds each. Some species are valued in cultivation, and many are invasive.

Senna alexandrina, the type sepcies, is a mild but effective laxative which has known medicinal use for two millennia; this is due to the action of Senna glycosides, extracted from the pods. This group of chemicals is used in commercial pharmaceutical laxatives such as Senokot, and others. Senna leaves have been used topically as an ointment for sores and ulcers. The toxic seeds of *Senna occidentalis*, when roasted, lose their poisonous nature, and are valued in many places throughtout the world as a coffee substitute. Some Sennas were formerly classed as genus *Cassia*.

> It is not a little contrary to melancholy and obstinate fevers and obstructions, as mother of the happiness and prosperity of the entire body, to the point that the Arab Serapione commended it as a sedative for delirium, calmer of agitations of the mind and healer of shaken nerves, scaly, itchy, and pimply scabies, and of epilepsy; and finally, very friendly towards our vital principles.
>
> OVIDIO MONTALBANI
>
> *Formulario economico cibario, e medicinale, 1654*

Senna receives the planetary emanations of both Mars and Saturn. Regarded with great magical esteem for its reliable powers of purgation, this characteristic is seen to manifest within the plant's attendant corpus of spells and rituals as well. Islamic magic values Senna as an agent of expelling witchcraft, particularly that which is lodged in the body. *S. singueana*, a Ugandan species, is smoked to keep away malefic spirits, and to help those who are lost return home. Brazilian Candomblè makes use of the sacred herb Fedegoso (*Senna occidentalis*) against fascination by invoking the fresh plant in conjunction with the Christian Trinity.

The Spirit-Retinue of Senna

Catharsis, Extrusion, Envelopment, Dislocation,
Ostracism, Expunction, Disconcertion,
Intimidation, Dissuasion, Vigorous
Exertion, Coarse Propulsion,
Scrupulous Action and
Forceful Rectitude.

SERPOLET

Thymus serpyllum

Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

ALSO known as Wild Thyme, Serpolet is a fragrant prostrate evergreeen shrub with purple, pink or magenta flowers, growing to 15 cm in height, widespread in Southern Europe and North Africa. In cultivation, it is a valed culinary spice and forms an attractive groundcover in rock gardens. Horticulturally it is sometimes referred to as Mother of Thyme; in perfumery it is the source of Oil of Serpolet, an essential oil considered milder in character than distillates of *Thymus vulgaris*. Its medicinal properties are aromatic, antiseptic, stimulant, antispasmodic, diuretic, and emmenagogue. In traditional Arabian medicine, it is often used in antidotes.

The planetary ruler of Serpolet is Venus, and its magical properties are Love, Allure, Protection, and Exorcism. Serpolet has also enjoyed repute as an aphrodisiac.

> The fresh roses and this thick creeping-thyme are a gift to the Heliconian Muses; the dark-leaved laurel branches are for thee, Pythian Paean, since the rocks of Delphi gave thee this bright foliage to wear. But thy altar shall be reddened by the blood of this white horned goat that is nibbling the end of the terebinth branch.
>
> THEOCRITUS
> *Epigrams*

It may be prepared as a ritual incense, oil or decotion. Efficacious when fresh, the plant is ideal for a strewing herb, evolutionarily suited for being trodden upon, even while alive to release its aromatics. In Polish folk magic, Serpolet was employed as an aphrodisiac and as protection against evil spirits. Among the Kacha peoples of Southern Siberia, the plant was known as *Irben*, and was much used in rituals for its purificatory smoke.

SESAME

Sesamum indicum

Pedaliaceæ (Pea Family)

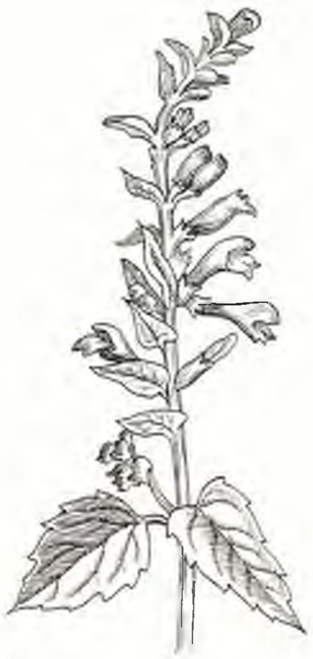
AN annual plant native to Africa, Sesame grows to one meter in height, having lanceolate leaves and small, lobed, tubular flowers. Floral color varies with cultivar, and can be purple, blue, pink or white; its fruit is a pod-like capsule filled with an abundance of small oval seeds. Cultivated for their rich, nutritious oil, Sesame seeds are an early edible crop; some archaeobotanical estimates place the domestication of Sesame as far back as 3,000 BCE. It is formerly classed in the Pea Family but now resides in the Pedalium or Sesame Family. Aside from its culinary use, Sesame Oil has been used in folk medicine, applied topically to the skin for pain. In the traditional Turkish pharmacopoeia, Sesame seeds are considered aphrodisiac, and eaten raw.

Among the planets, it corresponds with the classical attributes of Jupiter, being unctuous, nutritive and sustaining. Yet it also inclines to the traits of Saturn, for its ability to penetrate the realms of ghosts and the dead. Its powers as expressed through magic are Protection from Disease, Protection from Maleficia, Love, and Allure.

In India, the oil was sometimes given in offering to rodent vermin, as a means of mitigating their pestilence. In Malabar, a Nayar exorcistic charm against ghosts prescribes oil rubbed on the body of the mourner, together with Sesame seeds.

The old German grimoire the *Munich Handbook* references a magical lamp to provoke prophetic dreams, fueled with sesame oil and cinnabar.

In Bahamanian folklore, carrying Sesame seeds was advised as protection against evil spirits for those walking the roads at night. Should a malign presence pursue the traveler, it could be overcome by casting seeds on the path. Compelled to count them, the spirit would thereby be distracted.

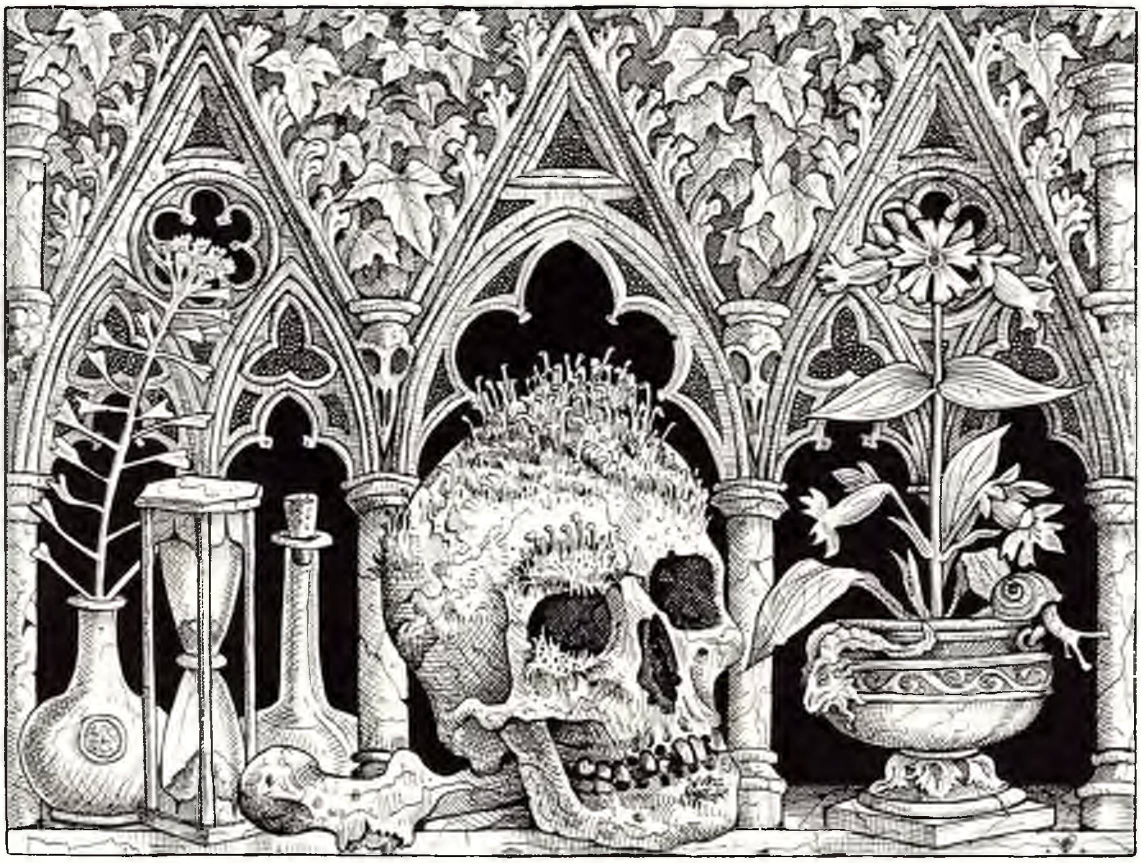


SKULLCAP

Scutellaria laterifolia; also *S. galericulata*

Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

BLUE Skullcap or Hoodwort is a perennial herb native to North America growing to 1 meter in height; it is found in meadows, moist lands, and populating riparian courses. The plant is many-branched; its leaves are oblong, yet pointed; with small blue downy flowers, tubular in shape, situated between leaves and stem. Older European herbals feature Hooded Skullcap (*Scutellaria galericulata*). *Scutellaria*, the genus of True Skullcaps, contains over 450 accepted species native



to temperate regions, many medicinal. The aerial portions of the plant are the parts used.

A superb nervine, sedative, and antispasmodic, Skullcap is present in many traditional herbal pharmacopoeias. An infusion freely drunk has been used for both rabies and St. Vitus' dance; and to treat nervous headache and neuralgia. Tea or tincture of the whole herb may be taken to counter insomnia. Huang Qin (*Scutellaria baicalensis*), one of the Chinese Skullcaps, has been shown to lower blood pressure; *Scutellaria barbata* demonstrates inhibition of certain types of cancer cells. The dry herb may be smoked for psychoactive properties, though there are considerable differences between species.

Its planetary resonance is balanced between Venus and Mercury. Its powers as used in magical operations are Fertility, Love, Marriage, Protection from Noxious Spirits, and Healing. A tea for increasing dream activity may be made using an infusion of the herb, either alone, or with other allied plants.

* * *
* *
*

The Spirit-Retinue of Skullcap

Equilibrium, Affability, Tranquility, Pacification,
Somnolence, Ease, Lucidity, Consolation,
Palliation, Vigilance, Languid
Pleasure, Shadowed Haven,
and Veiled Shelter.

SKULL MOSS

IN the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Muscus Cranii Humani (Moss of Human Skull) was an official drug, being a Lichen harvested from the surface of a human skull, sometimes of a criminal who had died a violent death. It, along with other similarly derived body parts and their products was obtainable in England due to the common practice of exposure of the bodies criminals after they had been executed. Lichens also formed on skeletal remains in partially aerated crypts, or on battlefields, and indeed on animal skulls as well. Skull Moss appears in some sources as a sovereign cure, and in others as an ingredient in a patent medicine. *Lichen Saxatilis* was another apothecary's name for Skull Moss.

> The writers of those times distinguished two kinds of *usnea humana*, under the names *crustacea* and *villosa*. Any of the crustaceous lichens, but more properly the grey-blue pitted *lichenoides* of Dillenius, was used for the former there; and as Dele tells us, was held in most esteem. The *villosa* was a species of *hypnum*. Indeed, it does not appear, that they were in those days very curious in determining the exact kind; and doubtless any moss, which happened to grow upon an human skull, was sufficient for the purposes deigned.
>
> *Philosophical Transactions*, 1759

Generally, it was considered a stypic. Use of *Usnea capitatis humani*, or Skull-Moss Usnea, was a Scottish Highland cure used to arrest bleeding, and was deemed so powerful it could stop bleeding anywhere on the body if merely held in the hand. Other healing powers were ascribed Cranium Moss, often specific to conditions of the head such as epilepsy and convulsions.

Usage of Skull Moss arises from the concept of the spiritual sympathy between natural objects and the human body, and the belief that a portion of the spirit, or vital essence of the organism, has passed from the bone into the lichen. Magically, it may be considered a curious embodiment of the arcanum of necromancy, the Lichen drawing nutritive benefit from the gradual decomposition of bone over time. Thus, both as a therapeutic medicament and adjunct to magico-religious practice, Skull Moss may be considered transmutative in power, a crystallization of Resurrective Virtue, relating to the skull much as does bread to the fallen grain. The Lichen, as well as the bone it adheres to, may be preserved in tincture, or by distillation with oleaginous media and plant resins, rendered as an oil.

Post-Enlightnement sources take pains to repudiate the Moss, increasingly describing it with anti-superstition ridicule and thinly veiled embarrassment. Despite this, a considerable number of *Usnea* species, emerging from the ancient pharmacopoeias of traditional societies, have been used as a medicine against various infections, and in laboratory research exhibit antibacterial, antiviral and antifungal properties.

* * *

SMALLAGE

Apium graveolens

Apiaceæ (Dill Family)

SMALLAGE is the wild form of the biennial garden herb Celery, grown for its fragrant stems, leaves, and seeds. Inhabiting moist areas of temperate climates, it grows to one meter, but as a domesticated garden variety is considerably shorter. Having pronounced ribbed stalks, and compound leaves, its flowers are umbels ranging in color from green to white to yellow. The seed or ripe fruit is an achene and is also fragrant and medicinal. Smallage cultivars bred and grown for the edible roots are known as Celeriac.

The genus *Apium*, containing 17 accepted species, is also known as the Marshworts, reminding us of their preference for wet habitats. Older botanical sources often use *Apium* as a catch-all for any umbelliferous plant preferring wet environments, an error that can have disastrous consequences considering the number of toxic plants answering to this description. In other cases, it has been mistakenly applied to distantly related but separate spice herbs such as Caraway (*Carum carvi*).

As used in natural medicine, Smallage is anodyne, tonic, nervine, stimulant, antirheumatic, antiseptic, and aphrodisiac. The seed may be boiled and drunk for rheumatism, and the leaves have been compounded in an ointment and applied to topical sores. A decoction of the entire plant may be used externally for burns. For medicine, wild individuals must be sought, as domesticated Celery varieties, through breeding to favor a crisp leaf stalk, are often denuded of medicinal virtue.

As aligned with the powers of the seven planets, Smallage comes under the dominion of Mercury. However, because of its water-loving nature it also expresses Lunar qualities and may favorably be included in magical operations governed by the Moon; its amorous principles also sway it to the astrological influences of Venus.

Its occult properites are Allure, Charisma, and Fortification. In magical formularies of the early modern era it is found as an ingredient in love philters and sexual tonics, a role it shares with its botanical cousin Lovage (*Levisticum officinale*). Both plants are rousing, aromatic, and share a common heritage as an aphrodisiac foodstuff. In magical operations, the plant portions used are root, leaves, and seed.

In *The Histories*, Herodotus notes that ancient Scythian kings, prior to burial, had their stomachs opened and emptied, then filled with seeds of Smallage, Anise, and Frankincense and chopped Galangal, then sewn up. The entire corpse was then covered and interred. Intact Smallage garlands were also found as grave goods in the tomb of Tutankhamun.

SNAPDRAGON

Antirrhinum majus
Plantaginaceæ (Plantain Family)

GROWING to one meter in height, Snapdragon is a perennial herb with lanceolate leaves, and flowers of white, yellow, orange, pink, salmon and red. Prior to recent taxonomic revision, it was formerly classed in the Scophulariaceæ, or Figwort Family. The plant is a traditional mainstay of the garden and there are numerous cultivars.

Snapdragon has enjoyed repute as a powerful plant talisman due to the mouth-like morphology of its flowers, and its seed pod, which can alarmingly resemble a human skull. In magical usage, it is ascribed the powers of Protection from Maleficia, Divination, Consecration, Binding, and Protection from Fire. Its flowers are reckoned as gluttonous, vessel-like growths, and may be cut and placed in a vase, then set in heavily infested areas as spirit-snares.

Dioscorides observed the use of Snapdragon as a talisman against malicious enchantments and poison; he also remarked that when anointed with Oil of Henna, it could be used as a charm for glamours or 'making one agreeable'.

In the ancient Coptic magical text *The Books of Jeu*, Jesus conducts the rite of the Gnostic Fire Baptism, which uses a number of magically significant plants. One is *kynokephalon*, or Doghead, a species of Snapdragon whose flowers were thought to resemble the head of a sacred Egyptian baboon, placed in the mouths of the disciples.

Greek Magical Papyrus PGM VII. 619–27 relays that a sorcerer may attain invisibility by holding a Snapdragon under the tongue whilst sleeping and reciting specified names upon rising.

SOLOMON'S SEAL

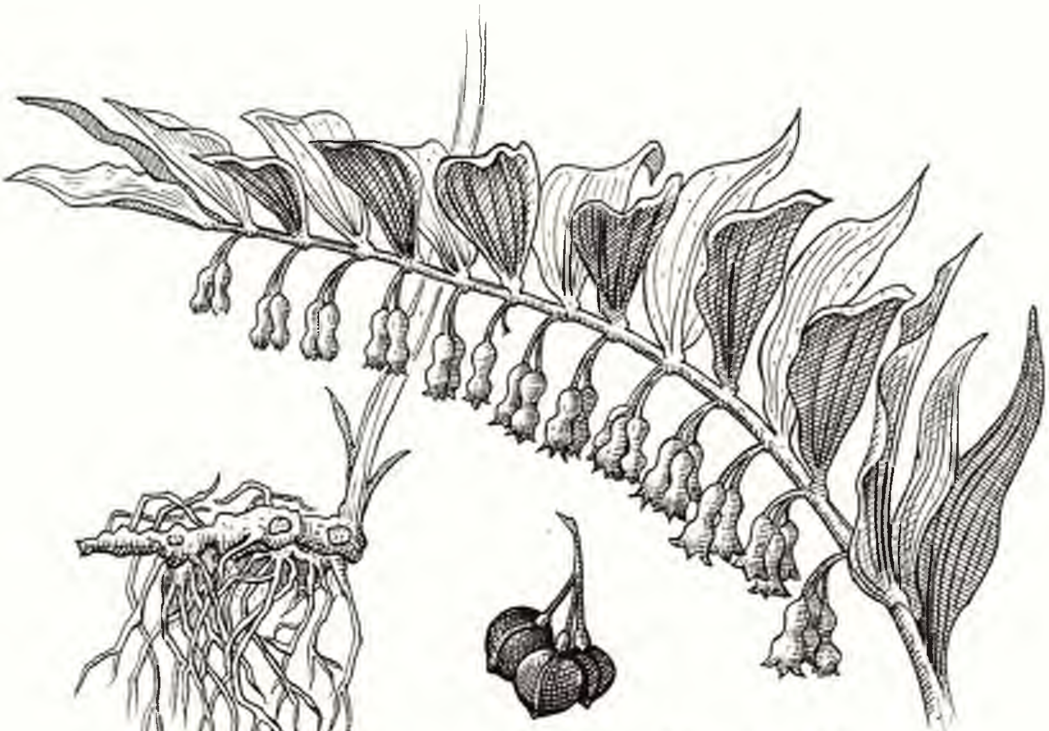
Polygonatum multiflorum (Common Solomon's Seal)
Polygonatum odoratum (Scented Solomon's Seal)
Asparagaceæ (Lily Family)

SIGILLUM Solomonis is a perennial herb, common to many parts of North America. Growing to 1 meter high, it has an arching stem with alternate leaves, from which drooping whitish green flowers hang, giving way to brown or bluish-black berries. The creeping rhizome, which is sometimes fragrant, is the portion most often used in folk magic and occult operations, though all parts of the plant are virtuous. *Polygonatum* is the genus of True Solomon's Seals, containing about 70 accepted species, distributed throughout moist woodlands of the northern hemisphere. Solomon's Seals can also readily adapt to a garden environment. Formerly classed within the Lily family, the plant has more recently been assigned to the Asparagus family on the basis of genetics. Owing to some morphological resemblance, it was also formerly considered a relative of Lily of the Valley (*Convallaria* spp.), with which it shares the nauseant glucoside convallarin.

Historically, the herb was given for consumption, knitting bones and allaying bruises, as well as bleeding of the lungs and other hemmorhages. The root contains saponins, acetidine-2-carbonic acid, and chelidonic acid. In some European countries, the plant was used by women as a cosmetic rubefacient, for flushing the cheeks for a rosy appearance. More recently, Whorled Solomon's Seal (*P. verticillatum*) has been investigated scientifically for its potentials as an aphrodisiac. The berries, containing anthraquinone analogues, are mildly poisonous if ingested.

In planetary and astrological esotery, Solomon's Seal is aligned with Saturn. Its magical properties, as emergent from its historical use in ritual, are Necromancy, Spirit Summoning, Exorcism, Protection, Healing, Wisdom, Protection from Disease; Love, and Success. The white flowers were used in aphrodisiac philters. In magical medicine, it was employed as a charm to exorcise disease-causing noxious spirits from sick persons.

Though Solomon's Seal was of esteemed magical pedigree in the European traditions, it was also important in Native American sorcery.



Polygonatum multiflorum

A native North American species of Solomon's Seal, *Polygonatum commutatum*, was one of the moſt important magical plants of the Kickapoo of northern Mexico. The Chippewa burned the root of *P. biflorum* as a perfume to promote a deep and reſtorative sleep. The rhizome of the same plant was also used as food, to make a kind of bread.

The root was also burned or smoldered on hot coals as an incense of 'bringing back', i.e., revival of the unconscious or spirit-possessed. A particular form of this smudge combined the dried roots of Downy Solomon's Seal (*P. pubescens*) with twigs and leaves of Aborvitae (*Thuja occidentalis*), the smoke of which was blown into a dying person's noſtrils to reſtore them to life.

SOUTHERNWOOD

Artemisia abrotanum

Aſteraceæ (Sunflower Family)

AN AROMATIC perennial shrub to one meter, with a flamelike silhouette, having thin silvery-gray leaves and dense cluſters of yellow composite blossoms. In comparison to many of its fellow Artemisias, Southernwood presents a more hoary, ſtout and rugged appearance. The portions of the plant utilized are the leaves and bark, and occasionally the small fruits. It is ſtrongly fragrant.

Its properties as affecting the human body are ſtimulant, emmenagogue, vermifuge, aromatic bitter and hepatic; these properties make it useful for cordials and bitter liqueurs if used sparingly. As with Mugwort, this herb may be effectively used in dream and sleep pillows: the 14th century Physicians of Myddfai, Wales prescribed Southernwood pounded in wine to arreſt somnambulism. Like Wormwood, it has been used to expel worms and it has also garnered folk use as a moth repellant. These potencies are mirrored in its magical function as a plant of exorcism, for which use its cut leaves may be ſtrewn.

It embodies the planetary natures of both Mercury and Venus, and its power as translated to occult spheres manifeſts as a love charm, a bringer of fertility (particularly male), a funerary plant and for exorcism. The Romans considered the plant potent againſt those bewitchments causing impotence, and in Poland, the plant was used as a talisman againſt lightning-ſtrike, especially when planted near a house.

In the magical lore of New England, the plant was used as a love-charm, often by women seeking men to marry. A sprig of the plant was tucked into the clothing or placed under the pillow;

the next man the woman saw she would marry. An old charm for magically consecrating a bed sprinkles Southernwood liberally throughout the sheets, pillows, and mattress.

SPANISH BROOM

Spartium junceum

Fabaceæ (Pea Family)

KNOWN also as Weaver's Broom or *Spartu,* Spanish Broom is an herb growing to 3 meters in height, producing the fragrant, yellow pea-like flowers so prevalent in those plants commonly known as Brooms. It is distinguished by its seeming lack of leaves, projecting the appearance of a flowering bundle of rushes or twigs. In fact, the leaves are minute, though only visible at close range. The genus *Spartium* contains only one species; former species such as *S. spinosum* and *S. villosum* are no longer recognized. Favoring warmth and dry soils, it is native to the Mediterranean, but naturalized in similar climates such as California, where it is now regarded as an invasive weed. A sweet, balsamic essential oil known as Genet Absolute is distilled from the flowers and commands a premium price.

It is chemically similar to Scotch Broom and related plants, but generally considered more potent. Its biochemical constituents include caprylic acid, scoparin, terpenes, esters, phenols, and the eponymous quinolizidine alkaloid sparteine ($C_{15}H_{26}N_2$), which demonstrates unique anticonvulsant properties.

The herb is Solar in nature, though also partaking of the esoteric arrays of Mars, and its governing element is Fire. The occult powers of Spanish Broom include Purification, Protection from Maleficia, and protection against evil spirits. It is particularly adept at harmonizing with ritual practices protecting the body, which is useful in warfare, and in any instances of confrontation. In the traditional magics of Peru and Ecuador, where it known as Retama, it is a powerful bringer of luck, purity and spiritual vigor, as well as a valued hepatic.

The portions employed are the blossoms and their essential oil. In other folk uses, the branches have been employed to create brooms, baskets, and a hoary type of cloth. The flowers, fresh or dried, have also traditionally been strewn about rooms to expel noxious spirits. In Tuscany, the branches are burned on Christmas Eve to prevent the Evil Eye. The dried flowers may also be used to fortify incenses or excoricsm and protection.

Spartium Ablution

A preparation for magical purification of the body prior to engagement with hostile or obnoxious entities of any kind.

Spanish Broom, fresh flowers and stems	90 g

❡ In a large vessel, steep the broken herbs in boiling water for two hours, or until cool. Bathe in accordance with one's usual routine, rinsing away all traces of soap. As the final rinse, pour the Spanish Broom infusion over the entire body and allow to air dry. If using dried plant material, reduce the weight by one half.

SPEEDWELL

Veronica spp.

Plantaginaceæ (Plantain Family)

THE type species, or Common Speedwell, is a delicate creeping herb with oval leaves and pale blue flowers populating fields, heaths, and other clearings. It is a favorite in rock gardens, and some species stalwart weeds. The genus *Veronica* contains 108 accepted species of both annuals and perennials, with others under assessment, and some former members now assigned to genus *Veronicastrum.* Its planetary ruler is the Moon, and the portions most often used are the fresh leaf, and dried roots and rhizomes.

In folk medicine, it is prescribed in cases of catarrh, bronchitis, eczema and other skin eruptions, and as an eyewash. Its healing powers were also invoked against gout and jaundice. Lotions and infusions have served as valued fresheners of the face, and it has also been used as a mild nervine. In colonial North America, the herb also saw use for venereal disease.

Speedwells were reckoned as plants of power among Native Americans, employed for both curing and magic. *V. peregrina* was used by the Ramah Navajo for its power in hunting: the plant was chewed and blown toward deer to assure the success of the hunter. The same species was also used as a ceremonial emetic and a fumigant.

It was also used as a potent purifying agent. The Iroquois used decoctions of V. *officinalis* to destoy the effects of maleficia, and the Menominees employed the root of *Veronicastrum virginicum* as a resusitant, a physic, and for purification after contaminated by the touch of a bereaved person.

In European lore, picking Speedwell was thought to attract thunderstorms. It was believed in some locales that if one stared at the plant for an hour or more, one would become blind. In British lore, plucking it was thought to level a curse on the picker, whereby his eyes would be pecked out by ravenous birds. In some regions the plant was used as a traveler's amulet.

An English love-charm used five flowers of Speedwell, together with three white Rose leaves, three red Rose leaves, and three forget-me-nots, all gathered when the Moon is full. These plant materials were boiled in 595 drops of clear Easter Water for a sixteenth part of an hour, then bottled. For efficacy, three drops of the potion were swallowed.

THE SPIRIT RETINUE OF SPEEDWELL

Winsomness, Coyness, Incongruity, Dark Impulsion, Silent Convocation, Hedged Starlight, Quiet Fervor, Coquettish Suggestion, Feigned Fragility, Swift Journeys, Plausible Danger, and Ephemeral Mischief.

SPIGNEL

Meum athamanticum

Apiaceæ (Dill Family)

AN herbaceous perennial growing to 60 cm, Spignel is native to Europe, and generally prefers alpine environments. Its upper portions have finely divided, delicate leaves and yellow-white flowers, while the roots are dense, thick, and hairy, and possessed of a more assertive and acrid odor. The fragrance of the living plant betrays a strong presence of coumarin, but also emanates certain 'green umbellifer' characteristics redolent of Fennel and Lovage. Given its ancient reputation, as well as its somewhat negelected status in modern herb gardens, it is a worthy plant for cultivation, especially for those who make liqueurs and bitters. If given a sunny site with acidic, well-drained soil, it may successfully be raised from seed.

In planetary correspondence, it is attributed to Venus. In Scandinavian lore, it was associated with Baldur the Beautiful. Though it is a lesser-known medicinal today, the plant was part of Christian monastic herbal tradition, and its virtues were extolled in the writings of Hildegard von Bingen.

It bears the common names Mountain Fennel, Meu, Baldmoney, Alpine Chervil and Bricin; its older designation in pharmacy was Aethusa Meum. Its German name is Bärwurz (Bear-Wort). The roots are aromatic and acrid, and were formerly used to scent snuff; it was a valued ingredient in theriacs, or counterpoison formulae. Today, they are used for making Bavarian liqueurs and schnapps.

Medicinal tea infused from the dried leaves is used for flatulence, upper respiratory congestion. As with many plants of the Dill family, it is used in folk medicine for menstrual disorders. In Albania, the aerial portions are traditionally used as a hair perfume.

SPIKENARD

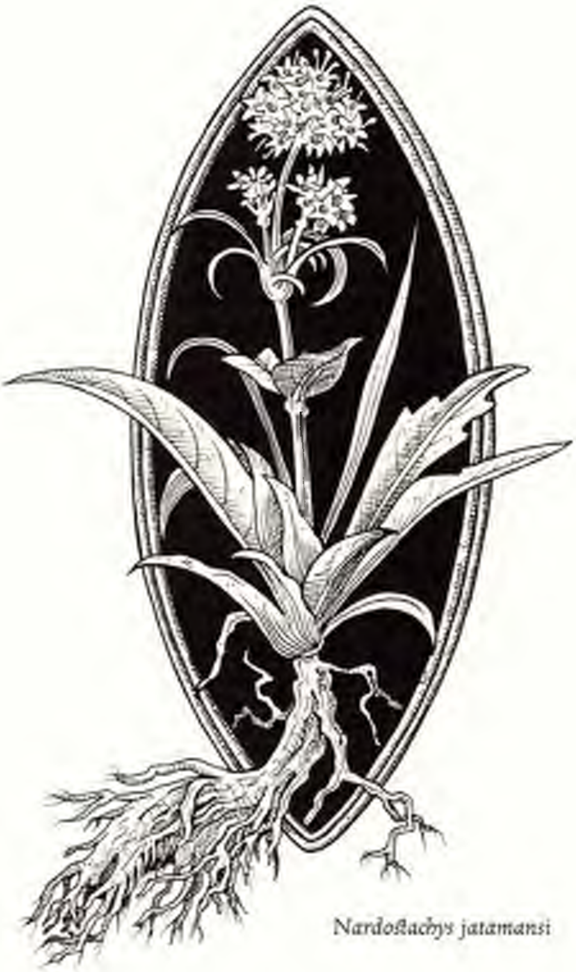
Nardostachys jatamansi

Valerianaceæ (Valerian Family)

KNOWN as Jatamansi, Nard, 'Little Goat', and Muskroot, True Spikenard is a relative of Valerian native to the Himalayas, where its musk-scented root has enjoyed long use as an incense to repel evil spirits. Because the plant had to be sought out in the wild, traditional lore considered it to contain a certain purity of essence, as it was not befouled by proximity to human habitation.

The parts used are the root and its essential oil. The scent may be described as heady, spoorlike, musky, and both alluring and mildly disorienting, and is comparable on several levels to Valerian, and also to Patchouli. The root, oil, and root powder are esteemed for the medicinal efficacy in Ayurveda. When prepared for trade, the roots of *Nardostachys* are occasionally adulterated with Bhutkheshi (*Selinum vaginatum*), and in many instances are even considered a legitimate substitute. Notable phytochemical constituents include actinidine, carotene, carenal, elemol, β-eudesmol; jatamols; jatamansic acid, jatamansone, nardol, nardostachonol, nardostachone, patchouli, virolin, angelivin, jatamansin, jatamansinol, and oroselol.

In magical texts from various cultures it was conflated with other aromatic plants producing a dual fragrance of musk and floral notes. In Biblical texts, the Spikenard mentioned is probably a species of Lavender, its fragrant blossoms steeped in olive oil or some other unguent. This was likely the same Spikenard that ancient Romans used in an ointment for the burial of their dead. Likewise, Dioscorides made a confection of viper's flesh called *Sal Viperum*, as an antidote to poison: the snake was roasted with figs, salt, honey and a plant answering to the name of Spikenard, but this was likely not *Nardostachys*.



Nardostachys jatamansi

SPRUCE

Picea spp.
Pinaceæ (Pine Family)

THE genus *Picea* comprising the True Spruces, contains about 40 species of evergreen conifers in the northern hemisphere, ranging in height from 20-60 meters. The needles are green to glaucous, and the cones often, but not universally, enlongated. It produces a resin which, like that of all conifers, is fragrant when burned. As known in the materia medica of European occultism and folk magic, it is often this resin or pitch which is the portion used, usually for incense, and was formerly known as Burgundy Pitch, Pix Burgundica; Resina Pini Burgundica. The branch-bark may also be utilized as a lignic ingredient in incense, as may the interior wood, which is more fragrant. Resin is often exuded by the cones, which may be scraped and collected.

Among the celestial powers it is first aligned with Saturn, and secondarily with the Sun. Its spiritual properties are Protection, Exorcism, Protection from Noxious Spirits, Consecration, Funerary, Illumination, and Inspiration.

In indigenous North American plant traditions, the pitch or resin of the White Spruce (*Picea glauca*) has been used as a purifying ceremonial incense. Sprigs of the Sitka Spruce (*Picea sitchensis*) were used for power by the Makah whalers of the Pacific Northwest, who tied them into their hair-knots before they went to sea.

Branches of Spruce may be burned, or brewed into floor washes following a funeral, to keep the spirit of the recently deceased from lingering. Geoffrey Grigson, in his *A Herbal of All Sorts*, reports the modern use of a carpet of Norway Spruce needles, placed as a ward outside a church to keep trolls away. The traditional folk magic of Ukraine, smoldered Spruce branches as a cleansing fumigation.

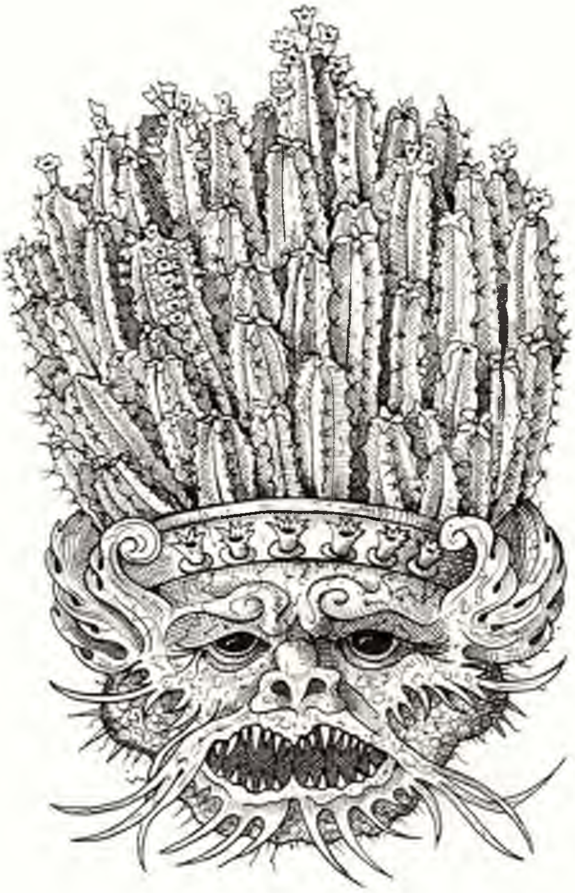
SPURGE

Euphorbia spp.
Euphorbiaceæ (Spurge Family)

SPURGE is an archaic name for a diverse group of heat-loving, blister-raising plants in the botanical family Euphorbiaceae and, more specifically, those of the genus *Euphorbia*. Spread like an inflamed, vesicant army across the earth, the genus is well distributed and contains over two thousand species. Characteristics of the genus as well as the family include milky, poisonous sap and a propensity for aggressive colonization. Morphological variation within the genus is extreme, with species taking on forms as varied as the compact shrub-like Poinsettia (*Euphorbia pulcherrima*) and the squat, barrel-shaped *Euphorbia horrida* which more resembles a cactus.

In various archaic magical contexts, Spurge was known by various names including Fat from a Head, Titimaglia, and Afarbiyun. Gum Euphorbium, indicating the dried product of its toxic latex, was the most common name by which it entered European magical and medical literature. Its magical virtues, as a complex, concern fire, irritation, conflagration, and acridity; its presence in magical incenses of antiquity often provides adhesion and binding to the aromatics, although its own scent when burnt unadulterated is sharp and piercing.

The Spurge family includes such luminaries as the rubber tree (*Hevea brasiliensis*) and the Castor Bean (*Ricinus communis*). Spurges of various species have been used medicinally in their native Africa, as well as for lethal toxins such as E. *systyloides*, prized as an arrow-poison. For physic, most Spurges are tried and true purgatives. The caper-like poisonous capsules of Caper Spurge, (E. *lathyris*) also known as Sassy-Jack, Springwort, and Wolf's Milk, is another species known to folk herbalists; a native of Europe, it has been used to induce drastic catharsis and abortion.



Spurge's ancient name 'Fat from a Head' may reference the appearance of *Euphorbia resinifera*, which has been compared to a bulbous devil-head; the 'fat' being the latex exudate from the injured plant. Certain spurges are linked with the diabolical *Zaqqum*, the punitive tree of sinners known from the Qur'an. E. *helioscopia* was known to the ancient Sumerians and Akkadians as a poison. A number of species in East Africa are used magical charms for protection from evil spirits, such as E. *lophiosperma* and E. *piscidermis*.

The Spirit-Retinue of Spurge

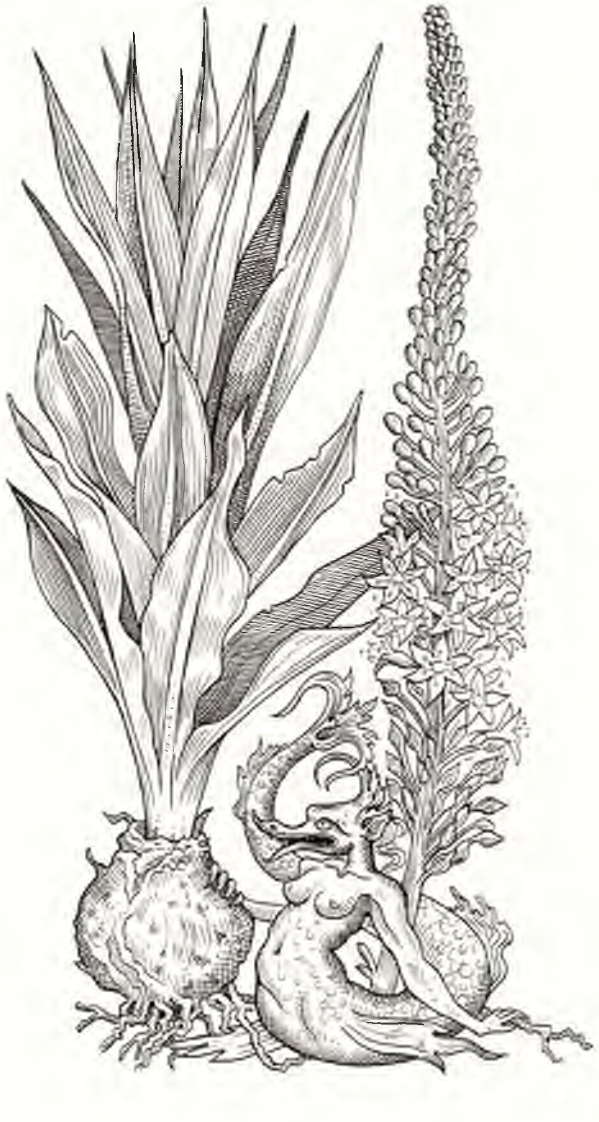
Inflammation, Acridity, Blistering, Wrath, Asperity,
Swelling, Obstinacy, Audacity, Grotesquerie,
Revulsion, Parching Heat, Vast
Permutability, & Protean
Figuration.

Various kinds of *Pedilanthus*, another Spurge species, are used by Mayans in the Yucatan as protection from sorcerers of ill will, as well as hostile spirits. The Indian Euphorbia Tridhara (E. *antiquorum*) is used as a talisman for prevention of lightning strikes; the flowers of Sehund (E. *ligularia*) are given as offerings to the snake-goddess Manasa.

> At times also women think they have been made pregnant by an Incubus, and their bellies grow to an enormous size; but when the time of parturition comes, their swelling is relieved by no more than the expulsion of a great quantity of wind. For by taking ants' eggs in drink, or the seeds of spurge or of the black pine, an incredible amount of wind and flatulence is generated in the human stomach.
>
> *Malleus Maleficarum*, 1486

Alchornea floribunda, an African member of the Spurge Family, is used as an admixture to magical Iboga preparations, or alone, for visionary and aphrodisiac effects. In the folk magic of Southern Italy, where it is known as *l'erva du garramone*, the latex sap of *Euphorbia helioscopia* is used as a topical penile application to attain erections.

In North America, the native *Euphorbia maculata* is a frequent uninvited guest in the garden, known for its prostrate habit, maroon stems, and delicate glaucous leaves. The irritant and toxic latex which is the glory of the genus may be collected for use as Gum Euphorbium by cutting the stems and allowing the white sap to drip on a clean glass plate. Air-dried, it can be scraped and stored for later use, an operation requiring patience, but nevertheless rewarding. I have also collected the gum of the native California Rattlesnake Weed (E. *albomarginata*) and prepared it in this manner.



SQUILL

Drimia maritima

Asparagaceæ (Asparagus Family)

KNOWN as a Sea Leek in Egypt, where it is indigenous on both sides of the Nile, the venomous Squill grows to 2 meters, with a tall, white inflorescence. A hardy survivor of drought, it is noted for its large, swollen bulb; official Squill was known to the alchemists as *Bulbus Bulbi*. In former botanical nomenclature, it was known as *Urginea maritima*.

Sliced and dried Squills, taken orally in small doses, behave as a stimulating expectorant; in larger doses, a vigorous emetic and purgative. Indian Squill (*Drimia indica*), known in Morocco as Jackal's Onion, has a reputation in folk magic as a potent aphrodisiac.

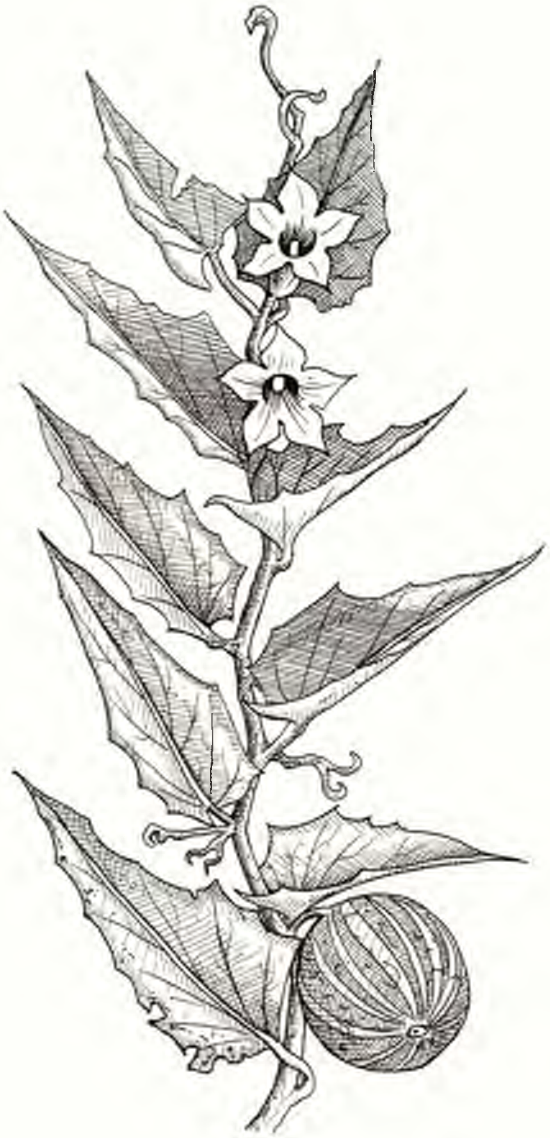
The powerful cardiac glycoside scillaroside ($C_{32}H_{44}O_{12}$) is derived from the fleshy inner scale of the large bulb and has been employed as a dread poison against rats and other rodent vermin. Mild poisoning results in inflammation and cramping in the gastrointestinal tract; appearances of phantasms or distortions of vision may also occur, as well as heart irregularity. Fatal doses end in cardiac arrest. As a lethal poison used for assassination, it was referenced in the medieval *Book of Poisons* of Ibn Wahshiyya, often as an admixture to the putrefied flesh of venomous animals...a rancid and baleful *mixtum*.

Its powers align with both Mars and Saturn. It is used magically as an apotropaic, for purification and exorcism, and for funerary rites.

The ancient Greek ceremony of the *pharmakos*, or scapegoat, involved taking the human victim to the place of sacrifice and fed with figs, cheese, and barley cake; flogging seven times on the genitals with Squill; and then burnt on wood gathered from wild trees. The ashes of the victim were later scattered to the winds of the sea. Squill was a valued herb used by some clergy in Christian exorcisms and protection magic, particularly during the period of European witch-persecutions.

Dioscorides reported the sprouting bulb as an *alexipharmacon*, or anitdote, hung up whole on doors. The practice continues in maritime Greece today, used as well to keep away unwelcome visitors. The ancient Greek dramatist Diphilus relays that the seer Melampos used Squill to cure the daughters of Proteus of a madness inflicted by Dionysus.

In modern Israel and Palestine, Squills are favored plants growing in Muslim cemeteries, serving as intercessors between the living and the deceased. Its name *basl et maytin* means 'bulb of the dead'. The ghostly white-petaled spires of the flowering stalk are distinctive in the Mediterranean landscape, evocative of the asphodels of the Great Beyond. The infernal bulb is thus an appropriate denizen for the necropolis-garden.



STINKING GOURD

Cucurbita fœtidissima
Cucurbitaceæ (Gourd Family)

THE Coyote Gourd, as it is also known, is an herbaceous perennial adapted to a wide range of climates and native to the United States, preferring semi-arid enviroments. Heart-shaped glaucous leaves are borne on a creeping vine, bearing yellow flowers. These are succeeded by striped, green, gourd-like fruits about the size of an apple, which ripen to a golden color. In those wild places where it grows, it is often hidden in the undergrowth until the autumn. As winter comes on, the withered stalks and yellowed, globular fruits strew the landscape, striking a haunting tableau after frost and ice have expunged all other wild annuals. The plant weathers extreme climate by way of a tenacious tap root, and the whole of the plant has a rancorous odor.

The plant is known to be a poison, and among those traditional healers who employed it, some fatalities from overdose were admitted. Certain Native American societies utilized the fat root of the Stinking Gourd as a cure for both syphilis and gonorrhea. Among the Shoshone and the Moapa, a certain Doctrine of Signatures was in effect as a ceremonial healing protocol, employing the part of the plant for the correseponding corporeal zone, such as the root for the foot, and the top for the head. The root was valued for its purgative action, and the Kawaiisu of California employed the rind as a detergent for washing clothes. Seeds were eaten, and when expressed provided an oil.

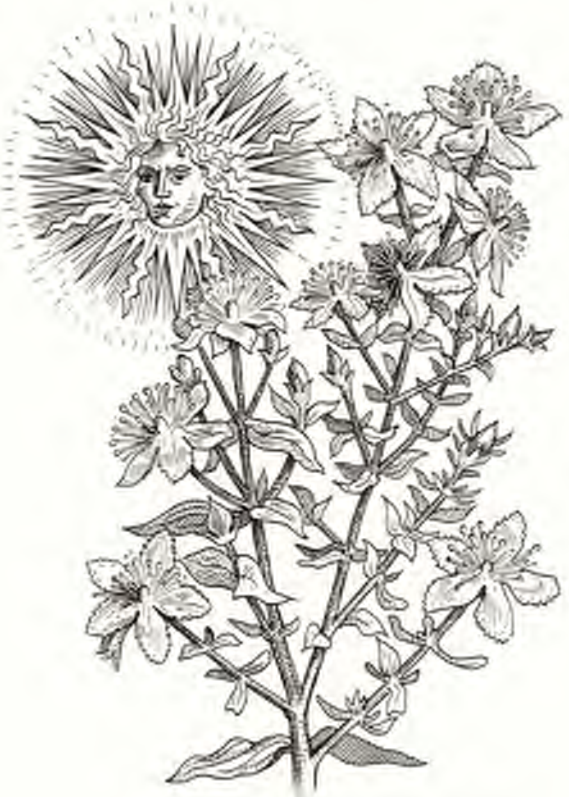
As with many gourds and their relatives, it belongs to the Moon, and receives its celestial emanation, but due to its rankness, poison and and bitter qualities, it also receives the dark miasma of Saturn. Its malodorous stench, as well as its action as a killer of parasites, suggests its use as a talisman against evil spirits. Among Native Americans, the ripened gourd was used for making ceremonial rattles.

SAINT JOHNS WORT

Hypericum perforatum
Hypericaceæ (St. Johns wort Family)

AN herb growing 15 to 60 cm in height, haunting low and damp places. It has pale brown stems, branched at the top, oblong stalkless leaves growing in pairs, these same bespeckled with small spots or 'perforations' (hence the specific name). Flowers appear in late Summer, they are bright yellow, resembling tiny golden fountains, and are followed by a brown seed pod. The leaves are sometimes used to flavour liqueurs; *Hypericum bellum* is smoked in Tibet as a substitute for Tobacco.

In medical herbalism it is regarded a strong theriac and hepatic; St. Johnswort is one of the very few herbs considered to be a universal specific. It marvels at flushing the urinary tract of pathogenic activity; it may also be used as a pulmonary, that is, to treat respiratory complications. The herb has also been used to treat diarrhea, jaundice and hemorrhages. The pigments associated with the plant are extremely complex and give a wide range of colors in natural dyes, including yellow, green, maroon, and black, but to ensure the best color one must gather the plant at the peak of flowering season.



Hypericum perforatum

For magical uses, some traditions maintain that the plant is of far greater potency when it is found accidentally, rather than when intentionally sought out. Gather it just prior to Midsummer, when the plant is at the peak of its virtue. It keeps well when thoroughly dry.

In planetary correspondence it is aligned with the Sun. In magical operations, it is accorded the powers of banishing, protection, demonifuge, protection from fascination, love, attraction and marriage. These esoteric principles, being preservative, protective and beneficial, align with the plant's virtue as an embodied Green Saint.

In magic, all portions of the plant are employed; for medicine, the leaf and stem take precedence. Oleum Hyperici, a golden-red oil infused with the herb's virtue, is said to contain the engorged essence of St. John's blood following his beheading, and is a prized medicament in folk healing. It may be added to massage oil or used neat for mild burns, inflammations, sprains, and rheumatism. Phytochemical studies on H. *perforatum* reveal the presence of hypericin, pseudohypericin, hyperforin, adhyperforin, quercetin, hyperoside, rutin, campferol, myricetin, amentoflavone, kielcorin, and norathyriol.

It is uncertain whether the demon-banishing plant known to the Greeks as *hyperikon* was indeed the same plant we know today as St. Johnswort. Nevertheless, independent of the Greeks, our St. Johnswort (and indeed, many other species of *Hypericum*) has an ancient reputation in sorcery for chasing demonic spirits. The herb was thought by practitioners to be the equal of Vervain for protection from fairies, and the odor of St. Johnswort, to some resembling Ambergris, was repugnant to demons. It was used in French folk-magic as a talisman placed outside the door of the home to protect against harmful spirits.

> *A house (or Chamber) somewhere in London was Haunted, the curtains would be rashed at Night, and awake the Gentleman that lay there... One Doctor cured the house of this disturbance... the principal Ingredient was Hypericon or John's wort put under his pillow.*
>
> JOHN AUBREY
> *Miscellanies, 1695*

Its German name *teufelsflucht* (Devil's Flight) aptly describes its abilities to chase pestilent spirits, and recalls the 1440 Lombardy herbal Tractatus de Herbis (Sloane 4016), showing a wary demon fleeing from the power of *Ypericon*. The *Thesaurus Pauperum* of the 1500s remarked that the herb was known by the common name 'demons bane' because if brought into a house it causes demons to flee. In a remarkable example of a European magical emetic, Canale's *De Secreti Universali Raccolti, et Esperimentati Trattati Nove* of 1613 prescribes oil of St John's wort in a glass of malmsey as a vomit-inducing potion to exorcise the influences of witchcraft. In Italy, if it was placed behind the door to the house, it would prevent malefic power from crossing the threshold.

The Spirit-Retinue of St. Johnswort

*Enrichment, Charity, Succor, Righteousness,
Congeniality, Advocacy, Decontamination,
Security, Restoration, Piety, Subtle
Desire, Amorous Captivation,
and Provocative
Adornment.*

Oil of the plant may be used as a charm to arouse love, either by annointing the body and clothing, or a specifically prepared talisman. In certain folk traditions of the British Isles, women wear a sprig of the plant in their bosom to variously attract prosperity, love, and to repel obstreperous spirits; men similarly wear the plant in their vests.

Charms to protect one from fascination or the Evil Eye are traditionally made from the plant. A protective house-charm, in the form of a woven boquet, may be made from St. Johnswort, Fennel, and Birch; hung on the front door, or at the entrances to rooms. A travelling charm from the Tyrol places the herb in the shoes of the wayfarer, its virtue preventing fatigue.

In medieval Europe, knights were allowed into tournaments only after swearing that they carried no St. Johnswort on their person, as the plant was known to give a warrior an advantage on the field. In more recent times, the herb has seen similar use as a charm in warfare. Soldiers smeared the sap on rifle stocks and barrels to increase accuracy of their aim.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Protection, Love, Exorcism.
Element: Fire.
Planet: Sun.
Saint: John the Baptist, St. Columba.
Divine Appellation: Devilfuge.
Body Part: Blood.
Magical Gesture: Sign of the Cross.
Eponymous Compounds: Hypericin $C_{30}H_{16}O_8$.
Therapeutic: Self-Compassion.
Affliction: Melancholy.
Alchemical Concept: Lapis Amandinus.
Emblem: An armored hand, bearing a leafing wooden cross, from which a winged demon flees.

STITCHWORT

Stellaria spp.

Caryophyllaceæ (Pink Family)

STITCHWORTS are perennials, and sometimes annuals, distributed throughout the temperate northern hemisphere. They are small herbs, many of which have edible leaves, growing to half a meter in height, and possessing a delicate stem with a characteristic single line of fine white hairs. Its small, pale flowers possess 5 petals which are deeply cleft, signaling their kinship to the Carnations, with whom they share a botanical family. The genus *Stellaria* derives its name from the appearance of its blossoms, which evoke the rays of stars. The plant's diminutive presence in many environments, often hidden beyond human notice in shady understory, bespeak its alignment with the faerie host.

The portions used are the leaf and stem. In Northern Coastal California, Chickweed or Chickenmeat (*Stellaria media*), may be found at the borders of Redwood biomes, where it often accompanies Miner's Lettuce (*Claytonia perfoliata*), another esculent 'weed' foraged for salad. In folk medicine it is mildly tonic and nutritive, and some species are edible and can be eaten raw. Folk medicine regards it as anti-inflammatory, digestive and mildly refrigerant. As an anti-inflammatory it is often used topically in the form of decoctions. Taken in strong infusion, the herb can be of aid in reducing internal ulcerations. The twelfth-century gynecological text *Trotula* lauded the use of *S. media*, cooked in an earthenware pot and placed over the belly, to provoke the menses. A tincture prepared from the fresh leaves is a wonderful spring tonic.

Stitchwort is allied with the planetary emanations of the Moon and Saturn. It powers in magic and spell-craft are Harmony, Love, Summoning Faeries, and Protection from Lightning. It is also a weather-telling plant: its leaves fully opened portend fair weather, but if shut, inclemency is predicted. The was ascribed the property of ethereal luminescence at night, much as the Mandrake was in ancient times. The herb has also been used as an amulet of protection.

An English species known as Pixy, Devil's Corn or Greater Stitchwort (*Stellaria holostea*) was believed to harbor faeries; those gathering the plant after sunset were sure to be ensorcelled by the wee folk, or 'pixie-led'.

Chickweed Tincture

⸿ Take fresh Chickweed, chopped or bruised, and pack into a clean steeping vessel. Cover the whole with a neutral spirit such as vodka that is 100 proof or 50% alcohol by volume. The plant material should abide within the alcohol for 5–6 weeks, in a dark, cool place, before being pressed and bottled. At this stage, the liquor will be a bright emerald green. As a tonic, or a means of attenuating oneself to the nuances of the plant, take 20–30 drops twice daily. For greatest benefit, it should be used within one season of its making.

SUMAC

Rhus spp.

Anacardiaceæ (Cashew Family)

ITS NAME originating from the Aramaic *summāqā* meaning 'red', Sumac species, properly comprising genus *Rhus*, are perennial shrubs and small trees native to North America, Europe, East Asia and Africa. Generally, they possess pinnately compound leaves, with lanceolate leaflets to 30 cm in length, and large, pale-colored flower spikes. They are noted for their bright red berry displays in Autumn; these sour fruits are drupes, and are an ancient spice in the Middle East. Sumac sap is sometimes a dermal irritant, an expected characteristic from this relative of Poison Oak and Poison Ivy. There are many Sumac species in North America, and its ethnobotanical use there is ancient and diverse. Some some species formerly considered True Sumacs are now reclassified as genus *Searsia*.

As used in folk medicine, Sumac is anti-inflammatory, astringent, emmenagogue and stomachic. Root decoctions have been widely used as an abortifacient and antiparasitic. The tannins and gallic acid supplied by the plant, long used in Europe and the Middle East for tanning leather, also contribute to the plant's anti-diarrheal action. Dried leaves were smoked for asthma. The sour vitamin-rich berries are used for food: either fresh, dried, in jam, or ground as flour for the making of cakes; in contrast to the bark, they possess a laxative property. *Rhus coriaria*, a European species, was used since ancient times for reducing swellings, and was particularly favored for treating the genital tissues, prolapsed uterus and hemorrhoids.

> Medical men also employ the leaves of these plants for the treatment of contusions, and for the cure of cœliac affections, and of ulcers of the rectum and phagedænic sores, for all which purposes they are pounded with honey and applied with vinegar.
>
> PLINY THE ELDER
>
> *Natural History*, V

North American species were used for dyeing and to make body paint; Flaming Sumac (*Rhus copallinum*) was especially valued as a dyestuff. Dyes extracted from Sumac included red from the berries, yellow and orange from the bark, and black from a berry-bark combination. Fustic, or 'Venetian Sumac', famous in Europe for its yellow dye, was formerly classed as *Rhus cotinus*, but is now taxonomized as *Cotinus coggygria*, also known to dyer and gardener as the Smoke Tree.

Generally, Sumacs are aligned with Mars, being hot, acerbic, inflammatory and concerned with defense. Their spiritual powers as manifest in magic and ritual are Purification, Consecration, Binding, Healing, Fortification, Allure and Fetishes. Despite its heat, the plant contains characteristics of temperance, and embodies elemental qualities of both Fire and Water. This may be understood as an Axis of Inflammation (from the sap) and an Axis of Soothing (from the tannic bark). Thus, where a fire is to be lit, Sumac may kindle it, and where such a fire becomes a conflagration, the plant may arrest burning. By these means, different parts of the plant may raise a blister or pacify irritation.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF SUMAC

Enhancement, Zest, Calefaction, Preserval, Precision, Mediation, Quarantine, Alleviation, Chromatism, Indelibility, Heroic Medicine, Intensified Force, and Vivified Wood.

In North America, branches and wood of Sumac were used by indigenous peoples such as the Hopi to make spirit fetishes and prayer sticks. The Navajo wove the twigs into ceremonial baskets.

After their turning a bright pink-red in the Autumn, the leaves were dried and deveined by many tribes and added to ceremonial smoking mixtures. Species such the Smooth Sumac (*R. glabra*) and the citrus-scented Fragrant Sumac (*R. aromatica*) were often blended with Tobacco for this purpose. The flower buds supplied the basis of traditional body perfumes.

In Cherokee ethnobotany, women wishing to raise a child as a witch would fast the infant for a time, then nurse the child after drinking a bark decoction of Sumac.

At least two unique Sumacs are endemic to Polynesia. Neneleau (*R. sandwicensis*) is native to Hawai'i, its wood is used in tanning and in traditional massage to fashion *lomi lomi* sticks. R. *taitensis* is found in the South Pacific, its fragrant wood used for making dugout canoes.

SUMBUL

Ferula moschata

Apiaceæ (Dill Family)

KNOWN also as Muskroot, Sumbul is a 'giant Ferula', reaching a height of 2.5 meters, having a solid, cylindrical stem, and large yellow umbels. A perennial native of Uzbekistan, and Tibet, the root has a musky odor and a bitter, aromatic taste. In older herbals, it was sometimes assigned to genus *Euryangium*. Adding to the confusion, at various times the name *Sumbul* has been applied to *Nardostachys jatamansi* and *Dorema ammoniacum*. The genuine plant, and the herb of commerce in Europe and England since 1835, is *Ferula sumbul*, from which the aromatic oil was distilled. In perfumery, it was used as a musk substitute. More recently it has been classified as *Ferula moschata*. When encountered in Western commerce, the plant is often in the form of dried roots, or an extract thereof such as an essential oil. Sumbul has long been used in Persia and India as an incense in religious ceremonies.

Sumbul's action upon the human body is in some ways similar to Valerian. It is a mild stimulant, particularly affecting the mucosa; in folk medicine it is used for the treatment of upper respiratory complaints. As a perfuming agent, its use seeks to emulate animal-derived musks, somewhat similar to the surrogacy role that Musk Mallow (*Abelmoschus moschatus*) has played.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF SUMBUL

Wantonness, Immodesty, Pullulation, Stimulus,
Movement, Vigilance, Rapport, Effrontery,
Confidence, Suggestion, Terrestrial
Ingenium, Arrant Display,
and Hirsute Wildness.

Sumbul finds its best planetary alignment with the qualities of Venus and Mars. Its occult powers are Allure, Oblation, Coercion, Beneficence, and Success. As a ritual adjunct, is best used in perfumes, incense, and compounded salves.

> Half an ounce of a tincture produced narcotic symptoms, confusing the head, causing a tendency to snore even when awake, and giving feelings of tingling, etc., with a strong odour of the drug from breath and skin which only passed off after a day or two.
>
> MAUDE GRIEVE,
> *A Modern Herbal*, 1931

Though some have attributed psychoactivity to the plant, my own experience of it is as a mild sedative, not unlike Valerian, but with curious features. This quality of sedation may seem at odds with the plant's attributes as being a stimulant, but the two can be reconciled as a description of a 'relaxed alertness'. Its use as a perfume and incense adjunct supercedes this quality, though when preparing incense, it may be certainly combined to good effect with sedating and mildly psychoactive resins of the Burseraceae, such as Frankincense or Gommier Blanc. When aromatized as a suffumigant, it also combines well with sweeter varieties of Tobacco and other coumarin-bearing plants. These things acknowledged, it possesses in itself a sufficiently noble, unique and complex character that it may stand on its own as an odor of high virtue.

SUNFLOWER

Helianthus anuus

Asteraceæ (Sunflower Family)

A VIGOROUS, rapidly growing annual native to North America, reaching a height of 3–5 meters, crowned with large, golden disc-shaped composite flower-heads much resembling the Royal Star of the herb's namesake. Like all members of the Asteraceæ, what at first appears to be a single flower is, in fact, a convocation of many flowers grouped together, each giving rise to a fruit, which is the familiar 'Sunflower seed' of commerce. *Helianthus*, the genus encompassing True Sunflowers, contains over 70 accepted species, all native to the Americas. Early Spanish conquerors invading Aztec temples found representations of Sunflowers in pure gold.

Its root, petals and fruit are the parts used; medicinally the plant is nutritive, diuretic, and expectorant. The fruit is are used to treat kidney complaints as well as cough. For cramping or hardness of the bowel, the powers of the root are well-known. An infusion created from the pith of stalks has been used to remedy conjunctivitis and general irritations of the eyes. The oil extracted from the seeds is a remarkable emollient.

Helianthus flower petals contain chlorogenic acid, vitamins (chiefly vitamin E); minerals (including potassium and phosphorus), and proteins. In 1633 Gerard remarked on the plant's esculent properties, saying that the developing buds, when prepared in similar fashion to artichokes, were not only delicious, but also assuredly aphrodisiac. Some species such as the Jerusalem Artichoke (*H. tuberosus*) produce edible tubers.

Allied with the Sun, its powers in magical usage are Allure, Fortification, Wealth, Commerce, Triumph, and as a love charm. In Native American ceremony, the plant enjoyed diverse uses including prayer sticks, as an anointing oil. The Shasta tribe smoldered the roots of *Helianthus cusickii* as incense to ward off disease.

SWEETBRIER

Rosa canina

Rosaceæ (Rose Family)

WITCHES' BRIAR, or Dog Rose as the Sweetbrier is also known, is a small deciduous small tree or shrub growing from 3–5 meters, generally in gardens but also in ruins. It has pinnate leaves with 5–7 leaflets, and pink or white flowers. The thorns are tiny, obstreperous, and surprisingly painful under certain circumstances. Sweetbrier produces a small but delectable hip, and R. *canina* is thereby a valuable Rose species for those growing it for fruit, tea, wine and jam. The flowers possess a unique rose fragrance, extractable under distillation, or fermentation, given a sufficient quantity of petals.

Its magical powers include Divination, Protection from Maleficia, Love Charming, and use as a Funereal Offering. In ancient times, *Rosa canina* was used as a remedy for the bites of wild dog, and a wreath of Sweet Brier was the prize given to victorious poets at the Floral Games in ancient Greece.

In astrological correspondence, Sweetbrier is generally attributed to Mars, chiefly due to its thorns, though as with all Roses, it receives a strong tincture of Venus. This commixtion of Martial and Venusian may be observed in the tiny, hooked thorns for which the plant is known, and stems bearing these barbs may be cast as love-charms to prick the clothes of one's desired, thereby ensnaring them to the heart.

The herb was, at one time, employed in sorcery to induce prophetic dreams. In the folk magic of Southern Italy, hips of Dog Rose are used as a talisman against fascination by gathering them into a small ritual bag and carrying it on the person. Serbian folk magic esteems Dog Rose as a powerful plant providing protection from disease.

Concerning the Powers of the Hedge

THE hedge or hedgerow, the dark green line demarcating the extremity of the field, is an ancient repository of plant power. As seen from above, it forms a verdant latticework across the British landscape, enclosing and defining individual allotments. Hedges have been in use for about five millennia, and some in existence today are in excess of 800 years old.

Though requiring some maintenance over time, hedges also embody a certain wildness with age, harboring bird species and other animals which gradually increase its botanical diversity. This state of being part wild and part cultivated typifies its suspension between two states of being.

Trees and herbs comprising hedges often possess qualities of hardiness and aversion, from the spines of such species as Hawthorn and Blackthorn to the binding tangles of Ivy. Barberry, Nettles, and Rose also typify this pattern. In some locales, trees of normally noble stature such as Oak and Beech are to be found in stunted and wizened forms, an embankment of branches and foliage no longer recognizable as arboreal, but nevertheless exhibiting all the rugged aspects of its wild heredity.

The density of species in some hedges is extreme and can take on the appearance of symbiosis or even a single organism. Generally, the greater the age of a hedge, the greater its biological diversity, and the more animal species it can ultimately support. Some owe their frames to ancient rock walls or earthen banks which remain at their core. Particularly wide hedges may accommodate footpaths, ponds, glens, and other inner worlds not visible outside their borders.

Hedge plants sought and gathered for their magical virtue are especially suited for defensive magic, as well as operations whose principal concern is the arcanum of the Boundary. As a site of ritual activity, their interiors serve as a locus of contact with Terminus, the ancient god of boundaries, and the spirit-dwellers of the threshold. As much as the magical qualities their plants offer, some hedges offer a wealth of medicinal plants, and fruits for the making of hedge wines.

Metaphysically, the hedge embodies a zone of in-betweenness. Representing a boundary or liminal world, it marks the terminus of one field and the gateway to another, yet is also a sovereign realm with its own characteristics. Within the dense clustering of branches, leaves and thorns, a perversion of light and darkness dominates, engendering mirages: a photic embodiment of its status as a borderland. The dwellers of the hedge are those harrowing presences haunting the threshold between waking and dream, hearkening to the old German *hagetessa*, the 'riders of the hedge,' an antecessor of the witch.

*

SWEETGRASS

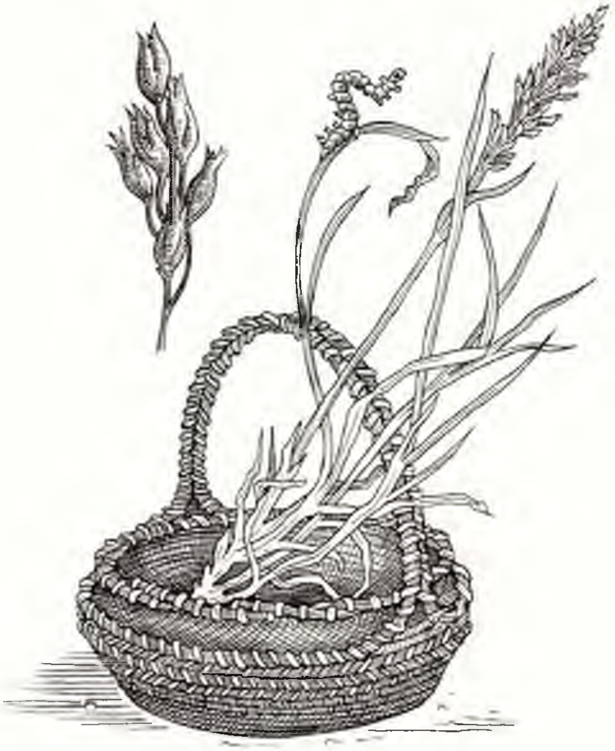
Hierochloe odorata

Poaceae (Grass Family)

ALSO known as Seneca Grass or Vanilla Grass, *Hierochloe odorata* is a tall, perennial wide-bladed grass with a reddish base growing to 1 meter in height, endemic to North America and Eurasia, with a distribution northward to the Arctic Circle. Its strong fragrance, owed to the presence of coumarins, persists on drying and easily passes into smoke when burned. Starts can be purchased in nurseries and are easily fostered in the garden, and the plant is sometimes encountered in commerce in the form of dried braids or bundles, which can can be smoldered. In addition to its role as incense, the smoke has been used as an insecticide. The generic name *Hierochloe* means 'Holy Grass', and the genus contains about 30 accepted species.

Its spirutal powers are are Purification, Consecration, Beneficence, Harmony, Summoning, and Oblation. Its functions as an herb of *Summoning* and *Oblation* refer directly to its use as a spirit food or offering to attract beneficial spirits. Because of its pleasant aroma and the mildness of its smoke, it is also favored as an herb for smoking mixtures.

Much of its ancient ceremonial use originates with Native American peoples, as the grass is widespread on the North American continent. The Blackfoot smolder the stems to accompany prayers, and the leaves were smoked with Tobacco. Sweetgrass is also a plant associated with the Sun Dance ceremony; the Cheyenne, Blackfoot and Sioux use it as a suffumigant to purify dancers. Is also has esteem as a consecratory smoke for rattles and sacred shields. The Kiowa used it during the peyote ceremony. Additionally, the incense of the plant was used for protection during storms, specifically lightning. As a power-plant, Sweet Grass's virtues of benevolence and purity were universally acknowledged.



Hierochloe odorata

In European traditions, Sweetgrass has been used to scent liqueurs, spirits, and as the basis for perfumes. It was also a popular herb for strewing.

Sweetgrass Wash

An aromatic formulation serving as as a liquid perfume for anointing hands and face, and to be used as a spirit-offering, during prayers, or ritual blessing of objects.

Sweetgrass leaf, dried, fine cut	10 g
Sweet Tobacco leaf, fine cut	3 g

¶ Place the herbs in a steeping vessel and cover with 200 ml grain neutral spirits at 60% ABV or greater. Allow this mixture to rest, shaking occasionally, for two months. Filter the liquid and assess its fragrance. If pleasing, seal in an amber glass bottle and reserve for future use. If a more intense fragrance is desired, add more Sweet Grass and Tobacco, adjusting each according to taste. Let macerate another month, then filter and bottle.

This is the basic formulation, but it may be augmented with an additional aromatic plant native to one's locality, in honor of the wild spirits there. When desiring greater potency, I add a few small fragments of a California Bay leaf (*Umbellularia californica*) or 3-5 flowers of Woolly Bluecurls (*Trichostema lanatum*).

SWEET WOODRUFF

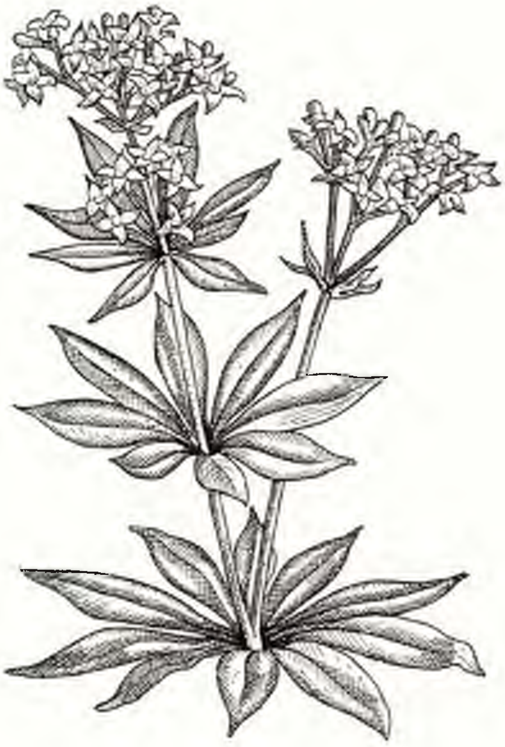
Galium odoratum

Rubiaceæ (Madder Family)

ELFIN in appearance, and concealed in the deep understory, Sweet Woodruff is a diminutive herbaceous perennial, with whorls of leaves and tiny white flowers. Native to Europe and Asia, it favors shade and forms dense groundcover, and is thus an essential dweller of the medicine garden. The aerial portions, grow more fragrant after harvest, a marvel due in part to the presence of coumarins, redolent of new mown hay. Making use of this property, the plant was in former times gathered in large garlands and dried, to be hung in the home to perfume the air; likewise, it was also used as a sachet for imparting its fragrance to clothes. The plant was formerly referred to by some as *Asperula odorata*, or simply Asperula.

Folk healing valued the plant as a nerve tonic, prepared from an infusion of the whole herb; this may be taken freely to combat depression. Preparations of it and related *Galium* species were used in folk medicaments against tumors and jaundice. The dried leaves and stems yield a pleasant and aromatic tea. Although simple preparations such as infusions derived from the whole herb are low risk, the herbalist is advised to remember that coumarin is toxic in high doses.

Its esoteric properties are Peace, Beneficence, Triumph, Protection for Children, and Protection in Battle. As harmonized with celestial emanations, its character is most often attributed to Mars. However, the magic of Woodruff, like nearly all species of *Galium*, is strongly connected to soothing, bewitchments, and to love magic, and this is borne out by its folk name 'Kiss Me Quick'. It is accordingly also aligned with Venus. Henry Cornelius Aggripa, following more ancient sources, aligned it with the particular rays of the star Aldebaran (α Tauri).



One old German spell for success employed Woodruff carried in a small pouch on the person. Woodruff was also a common European strewing-herb, owing to its compelling fragrance. The plant is sacred to Saint Barnabas, patron of the peaceful resolution of disputes. On June 11, his feast day, 'Barnaby Wreaths' of Woodruff and roses are traditionally hung on churches and houses.

The herb's best-known use was in the exhilarating Maibowle or May Wine, which arose out of an infusion of good white wine and the fresh sprigs of the plant. Known as Maibowle, the drink heightened the spirits and bore up the sweet and intriguing essence of the Master-of-the-Woods. Naturally, the dried herb may also lend the virtues of its flavor to the preparation of old-style European herbal liqueurs.

SYCAMORE FIG

Ficus sycomorus

A STATELY Fig growing to 20 meters in height, with a broad, speading crown, native to Egypt, Arabia, Cyprus, the Levant, and the African savannah. Favoring riparian and alluvial soils, its leaves leaves are generally cordate or ovate. The pink or yellow fruits, borne in clusters, are large, downy, edible figs. Like most *Ficus* species the tree produces a white, milky sap, a feature which, together with the sensual and nourishing qualities of the fruit, linkes it with the Egyptian fertility goddess Hathor. Although some ancient texts refer to this tree simply as a 'Sycamore', it is not the same as the tree known in Britain and Europe today as Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), with which it is sometimes confused. The name 'sycamore' is derived from the Greek *syka* (συκα) meaning 'fig'.

It is a tree of Venus, embodying sensual, nutritive, and salvific qualities, as well as beauty, aesthetic and civilization. Its occult properties are Love, Fertility, Allure, Fortification, and Protection. The chief portions utilized in magic are the fruits and branches, as wands. The tree also served as a spiritual and medicinal bulwark against poisonous animals.

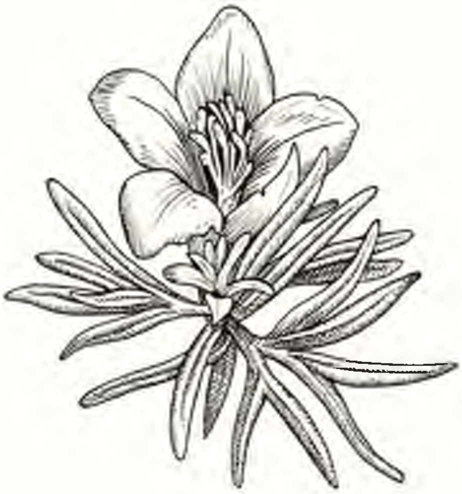
In ancient times, as well as today, the Sycamore Fig was an essential 'tree of life' in ther Near East, providing fruit, medicine and valuable timber, as well as much-needed shade beneath its wide, spreading branches. It was grown as an important ornamental, and traditional alcoholic beverages have been fermented from its fruit. The ancient Egyptians and Hebrews cultivated it, and it featured in the scriptures of both Judaism and Christianity.

> Hence they went to that sycamore tree, which is now called Matarea; and in Matarea the lord Jesus caused a well to spring forth, in which Saint Mary washed his coat; and a balsam is produced, or grows, in that country from the sweat which ran down there from the Lord Jesus.
>
> —First Gospel of the Infancy of Jesus Christ

In the Old Testament, Jacob used magically-charged rods of Sycamore, Poplar, and Almond in a fertility rite to increase the number of spotted animals in his flock after his contract with Laban. In ancient Egyptian cosmology, the dead, when crossing the desert on their way to the otherworld, would pass a hallowed Sycamore, incanting:

O Sycamore of the goddess Nut,
Let there be given to me the water
  which is in thee.

The goddess would then bestow food and water to the wayfarer, who was then bound to continue their journey. Acording to the writings of Pliny, Sycamore branches hung in the house were an effective charm against invasions of scorpions, vipers, and other vermin.



Syrian Rue

Peganum harmala
Nitrariaceæ (Nitre Bush Family)

An herbacious perennial to growing to about half a meter in height, distributed in some Mediterranean countries and the Near East, as well as the Himalayas. The plant has numerous spreading stems, with creamy white five-petaled flowers. The fruit is a round, papery capsule bearing numerous small, black, somewhat flat seeds. The oil-bearing seeds render up a classic natual dye known as Turkish Red, and in the United States can sometimes be found in Indian groceries, sold for this purpose. The plant also bears the names Besasa, Harmel, Esphand, Techepak, Hurmur, Peganon, and Uzerlich. In Ladakh, India, a *dhup* incense is made from the leaves of the herb.

In medicine, it is a vermifuge, antirheumatic, emmenagogue, and abortifacient. The seed has also been used to combat diarrhea. The seed oil, when consumed, has been claimed to be phytognostic and visionary in action. The plant contains the psychoactive compounds harmaline, and harmine, as well as harmalol, ruine, dihydroruine, and tetrahydroharmine. The seeds have been prepared as an Ayahuasca analog, together with a botanical tryptamine source, seeking the effects of the traditional brew.

Saturn and Mars are its principal planetary allies; its magical properties are Exorcism, Protection from Fascination, Allure, Attraction, Visions, and Purification. The plant is also esteemed as a House Ward. Its power as a chaser or evil is widely respected; a Turkish wedding custom utilizes the aerial portions of the plant to strike the bride, and son in law, as a magical protection against the Evil Eye.

Syrian Rue has strong traditions of use as a magical fumigant, and many usages of the plant involve burning or smoldering. The plant's relationship to fire and smoke is an essential part of its power, and recalls the intrusive spirits known as the jinn, by tradition formed of smokeless fire, whom some have classed as demonic. Indeed, among the Ubahti of Morocco, a suffumigation of *harmel* and benzoin is burnt on the spot where a person died, in order to prevent the haunting of the jinn.

In Balochistan, where it known as *Ispandan*, the seed is burned as a fumigant against evil spirits. In the Islamic magic of India, smoke from burnt *Ispund* protects new mothers and their babes from evil influences that might be brought near them by visitors. In Iran, an incense against the Evil Eye is made from the seeds, compounded with leaves of Frankincense and Myrrh. The accompanying incantation proceeds:

Wild rue, seeds of wild rue,
Thirty or three seeds of wild rue,
Crack the eye of jealousy or hostility,
In the neighbour to the right,
In the neighbour to the left,
In the neighbour across the way,
In the neighbour behind the house,
Whether tall or whether short,
With large eyes or with small,
With eyes of green or eyes of black.

As a magical incense it greatly esteemed in Morocco; in one recipe, it forms the basis of a fumigant used against demons and the Evil Eye. It is also used as in powerful agricultural magic: a fumigant made from Syrian Rue, Oleander branches and Izri (*Artemisia alba*) are used as an incense to suffumigate the threshing floor.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF SYRIAN RUE

Intimidation, Command, Strictness, Leverage,
Correction, Suzerainty, Awakening, Com-
posure, Acridity, Indelibility, Forced
Exodus, Holy Smoke,
and Spiritual
Hygiene.

* * *

TAMARISK

Tamarix spp.

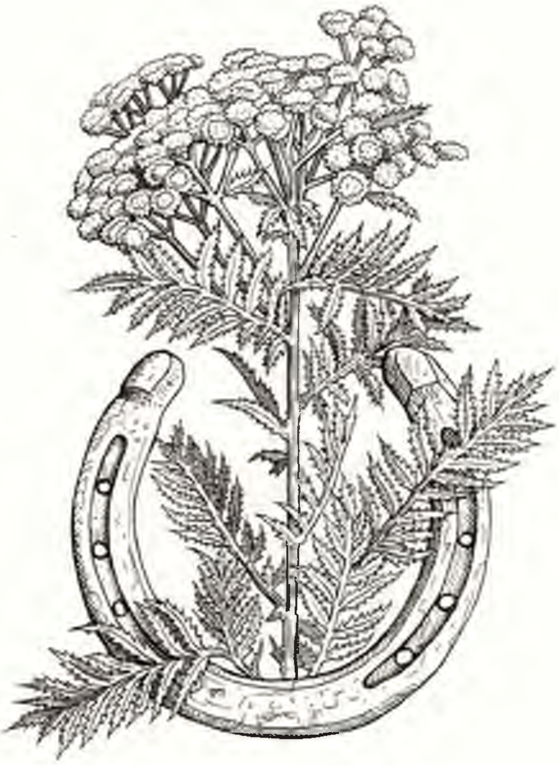
Tamaricaceæ (Tamarisk Family)

TRUE Tamarisks are classified as genus *Tamarix*, which contains about 55 species of shrubs or small trees inhabiting the arid habitats of Asia, Africa and the Levant. They grow in dense stands, reach heights in excess of 15 meters, and are typified by thin, scaled, often weeping branches. Tamarisk is one of a small number of trees which thrive within reach of the salt spray of the sea, and they tolerate both sodic and alkaline soils. Pliny recommended an ointment made from the leaves of Tamarisk, pounded with honey and wine, for healing cancers of the skin. In Greek magic, Tamarisk was sacred to Aphrodite; and *Tamarix africana* was sacred to Apollo.

In some legends of the resurrected Egyptian god Osiris, the chest containing his body drifted ashore at Byblos, coming to rest at the foot of a Tamarisk tree. In time the tree grew to enormous size, enclosing the chest in its girth. The King of Byblos cut the tree down to serve as a pillar for the roof of his palace; there it emanated a pleasing aroma, such that Isis knew it contained his body.

In the offeratory rites of the ancient Hebrews, Tamarisk was among the sweet-smelling woods decreed for burning on the altar, in addition to Cypress, Mastic, Juniper, Cedar, Myrtle, Pine, Small Pine, Aduna, Bay, and Camel's Thorn.

Where it grows in the Middle East, it embodies a type of tree-spirit of the wilderness. In the Falasha scripture *The Testament of Abraham*, the voice of an angel speaks to Abraham out of the branches of a Tamarisk tree. One species in the Sinai desert, *T. mannifera*, sweats a sugary dew sometimes referred to as 'Manna'.



TANSY

Tanacetum vulgare

Asteraceæ (Sunflower Family)

ABUNDANTLY colonizing roadsides and neglected ground, Tansy is a most joyful herb to behold, growing to a meter in height, having feathery leaves with a rosemary-like fragrance strongly redolent of camphor. It produces aggregations of flat, disc-shaped yellow flowers in summertime, and has a creeping, invasive root. The flowers, when pressed, will give up a golden dye; A color approximating Naples Yellow can be obtained by boiling the entire plant and mordanting with alum. The genus *Tanacetum* contains 165 species, including strongly fragrant plants such as Costmary (*T. balsamita*). Owing to its strong bitterness it bears many colorful common names, such as Bitter Buttons, and it is easily grown in the herb garden.

Its phytochemical actions on the human body are anodyne, depurative, vermifuge, abortifacient, circulatory tonic, hepatic, and insecticidal. Topically, Tansy improves circulation, clears bruisings and sties, and has been used with some success to treat varicose veins. Some prescribe it in cases of jaundice, or, taken sparingly, as a general tonic. The herb has enjoyed limited traditional use in treating gout. The seed, as well as tea made from the leaves, has been used to expel intestinal worms. There are some cases on record of fatal or near-fatal poisonings by employing Tansy oil as an abortifacient, which was popular in the Middle Ages. As a flavoring, the leaves were much esteemed by the Romany of Europe, and to some degree it is still used as an adjunct in this regard, though due to the presence of Thujone its use is commercially regulared in the United States. Nevertheless, its leaves were once a valued culinary herb, contributing a spicy, penetrating 'green' character with ephemeral hints of fruit.

As used in magic, its attrubited powers are Exorcism, Protection from Disease, Funerary, Longevity, and Fertility. In planetary correspondence, Tansy is ruled by Jupiter, with a secondary, and harmonious governance by Venus. It is governed by both Earth and Water, and, depending on specific application, either may be magnified.

In Europe, Tansy has an ancient magical pedigree, being esteemed highly effective against foul airs, noxious spirits, and disease-causing demons; in this capacity it was frequently used as a strewing herb. In the old folk magic of the Ukraine, it was burned as a magical fumigant against thunderstorms. The fresh or dried flower may be worn as a charm on the person for protection against disease. These magical uses resonate strongly with the phytochemical use of Tansy as an insecticide.

In North American colonial tradition, it was much used in funerary rituals in New England, and with time accreted morbid associations. Henry Dunster (1609–1659), the first president of Harvard University, was buried with a Tansy wreath which famously retained its shape and scent nearly two centuries later when the coffin was exhumed and relocated.

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TEREBINTH

Pistacia terebinthus
Anacardiaceæ (Cashew Family)

EMBLEMATIC of longevity, edurance and strength, the Terebinth tree grows to 10 meters, thriving in the scrubland in the Mediterranean and Near East. Its leaves are compound pinnate with oval leaflets, and the flowers are magenta or carmine red. Small clusters of round red berries, characteristic of the genus, follow the flower, and are esculent. All parts of the tree exude a balsamic fragrance, and in its native range it has traditionally been incorporated into varied foods, wines and liqueurs. It is a close relative of Mastic, and shares with it some similar physical and esoteric properties. A similar species, *Pistachia palaestina*, is found in the eastern part of its native range and was also called Terebinth: in biblical times it was well known, and possibly associated with idolatrous practices. Terebinth resin was a common additive to wines in ancient times for prevention of spoilage.

> They sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains, and offer upon the hills, under oaks and poplars and terebinths, because the shadow thereof is good...
>
> —Hosea 4:13

Among the rulers of the heavens, its constitution is endowed and regulated by the Sun, with especial favor granted by Apollo Physician. In the folk medicine near and adjacent to its native range, it is used as a valued anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, and diuretic. It was particularly esteemed as a topical to speed the healing of wounds and sores. In the medicine of Middle Ages Europe, it was used to treat cancers. The modern soap known as Bittim is formulated from olive oil and Terebinth resin.

Terebinth is the earliest source of Oil of Turpentine, which had stimulating, medicinal properties. Most modern commercial turpentines, such as those sold for paint solvents, are distilled from various species of Pine, and are grossly unsuited for medicinal use.

The resin was burned as a purifying incense by the ancient Egyptians, and it was also used as an ingredient in some of their finest perfumed ointments. Known in this milieu as *sntr*, Terebinth resin was also used as a mummification ingredient for preparing the corpse. In Armenian Christian funerary traditions, the tree was planted over the body of the deceased.

Pliny, who recorded its contemporary use as a liniment for sore limbs, also reckoned it as an aphrodisiac. An ancient magical ointment made with goose grease and terebinth resin, when rubbed on the body prior to intercourse, promoted the conception of male children.

THISTLES

Asteraceæ (Sunflower Family)

THISTLES are weedy, spiny annuals and biennials with composite flowers, with wide geographic distribution. Their spines remind us of their power as potent magical and medical armaments. Their tenacity of growth and perseverance in adversity serves to impress us with their salvific properties. In general, Thistles much appreciate growing in open wastes, where the sun affords them much fire: in planetary correspondence, Thistles are often of Solar or Jovian governance, being generally concerned with the harmonization of constitution. The portions used in magic and medicine are the seed, aerial portions, flower, and root. Many species are used in folk medicine to stimulate circulation, and also classed as hepatic tonics.

Within the diapason of occult herbalism, Thistles are most often used as a protective or excorcistic force, an essence allied to their tenacious and echinated habit. Twigs of Thistle have been used by some Romany groups as talismans to ward off malefic influences, especially in barns, and Greek peasants place bundles of Ground Thistle, Hyssop and Asparagus on the door or near the chimney to prevent the intrusions of the *Kallikantzaroi*, the coarse, earthbound spirits known for harassment of the living. The Carline Thistle (*Carlina acaulis*), carried as a charm on the person, may be used to aid the drawing off of vital energies from beasts or humans, simple acts of vampirism or lycanthropy. In Ukrainian folk magic, it is used to protect the carrier from evil. The same plant is also used in love magic. In eastern Saudi Arabia the Khuwwaysh or Smooth Sow-Thistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*) is valued for its sap, regarded as possessing great magical power.

In Morocco, the Distaff Thistle or Adad (*Atractylis gummifera*), contains a highly toxic glue-like resin concentrated primarily in its colossal tap root. It is used medicinally, but also for fatal poisonings. It forms the basis of a traditional magical suffumigant for combatting the Evil Eye and driving away foul spirits. The root of *Arzolla*, a Spanish species (*Centaurea ornata*) is used in folk-sorcery against the Evil Eye, the practitioner keeping a dried portion under the pillow during sleep. In Southeastern Poland, the Welted Thistle (*Carduus acanthoides*) was burnt as a ritual smudge to banish magical illnesses, or to turn bad luck. In Kenya, the ashes of the Spear Thistle or Tokoukowo (*Cirsium vulgare*) are rubbed into the skin for its talismanic properties.

Thistle Genera

GENUS	THISTLE GROUP	№ OF SPECIES
Atractylis	Distaff Thistles	30
Carduus	Musk Thistles	100+
Carlina	Carline Thistle	33
Carthamus	Distaff Thistle	45
Centaurea	Star Thistles	300–500
Cicerbita	Blue Sow Thistles	23
Cirsium	Field Thistles	120
Cnicus	Holy Thistle	1
Cynara	Artichokes and Cardoons	49
Echinops	Globe Thistles	120
Notobasis	Syrian Thistles	2
Onopordum	Scots Thistles	39
Silybum	Milk Thistles	2
Scolymus	Oyster Thistles	3
Sonchus	Sow Thistles	79

The air filled with thistledown was an ancient omen of a coming storm. Shepherds so noting the 'powdering of the air' were known to cry "Heaven protect yon vessel from the approaching tempest." If, in one's dreams, one stands amid a patch of Thistle, it is an omen of good fortune, and portends the coming of joyous events.

In Scotland, a decoction of Melancholy Thistle (*Cirsium heterophyllum*), served as a remedy against madness. As with the leaves of many Thistles, this corrective property may be used for restoration of the faculties after ritual trance.

THORNS

BOTANICALLY, a thorn is a modified leaf, bud, stem, or root, evolved by plants for the purpose of defense and puncturing enemies. Traditionally, their power in sorcery encompasses cursing, expelling demons, protection from evil spirits, and spells of revenge. These powers are acknowledged on a nearly universal scale in magic across many cultures, and have been from ancient times. In the Book of Genesis, the desert god Yahweh cursed the soil to bring forth thorns, as one punishment upon Adam and Eve.

Christ's Thorn (*Zizyphus spina-Christi*), a plant associated in folklore with the brutalization of Jesus, has long been prized for driving away demons; Dioscorides observed that the plant placed before doors and windows kept away poisons and enchantments. In the plant lore of Arabia, the hoary and spine-covered Sidr (*Ziziphus ziziphus* and *Z. nummularia*) are considered by tradition to be the source of thorns used in Christ's Crown of Agony. Curiously, the plant is also regarded as an accursed plant favored by the jinn, and thickets of Sidr are regarded as being infested with them. Taboos on using its wood for fuel thus attend on the shrub; *Ziziphus* species are also identified the holy Sidrat al-Muntaha of Islam, which marks the extremity of the Seventh Heaven, beyond which none may pass. Other Thorns, such as the grotesque *Castela emoryi* of North America, also bear the name Crucifixion Thorn, and are likewise effective at repelling noxious spirits.

Another thorn valued in protective magic is the spiny branch of the Gorse, *Ulex europaeus*, a most inhospitable member of the Pea Family. Boughs of Gorse, or Furze as it is also known, are sometimes hung above doorways to protect the house, especially on Beltaine. Some folklore regards its thorns as a stalwart sentry for guarding the exterior of the home, but bringing it indoors is avoided, as malignant powers will surely accompany its presence in the hearth. In some streams of Welsh folk magic, thorns of Furze are employed against sorcerers of ill intent.

In Vodou, cactus thorns are sometimes used to cause injury to a victim by impaling a doll or other fetish. Various species of Yucca (*Yucca* spp.) have been used in Navajo wizardry, specifically the needle-like leaf tip, for introducing maledictive power into the body of a victim. In Ireland, a poppet stuck with thorns called a *corp creadh* was made to cause a man or woman to waste away. Certain malodorous spells have employed a sacrificial animal, dressed with the hair or clothing of a human victim, which is then tortured with thorns or pins. Its use in witchcraft was noted in *A Discourse Concerning the Nature and Substance of Devils and Spirits* of 1665:

> For if a malitious minded Witch intends to consume and pine away the Life or Estate of any miserable Man or Woman, she makes his Image of Wax in such an ominous aspect as may conduce to her design, making several magical characters upon the sides of the head, describing the Character of the hour or Planetary time upon the breast of the Image; the name of the party on his forehead; the intended effect to be wrought upon him upon his back. When they cause aches, pains, and violent pangs in the sinews and the flesh, they stick thorns in divers places of their arms, breasts, and legs.

Thorns and sharp twigs played an important role in ancient Aztec religion, used for the bloodletting purposes of autosacrifice. Such spines were drawn through incisions made with obsidian blades, for the purposes of making blood offerings to the gods. Although thorns excel as instruments of bloodletting, there is always a risk of sepsis, which can be fatal, and a small but consistent amount of cases of blood poisoning from thorn punctures are recorded annually.

The Spirit-Retinue of Thorns

Termination, Constraint, Torment, Cessation, Punctuation, Warning, Enclosure, Lamentation, Cruelty, Invasion, Sharpness, Precision, and Assassination.

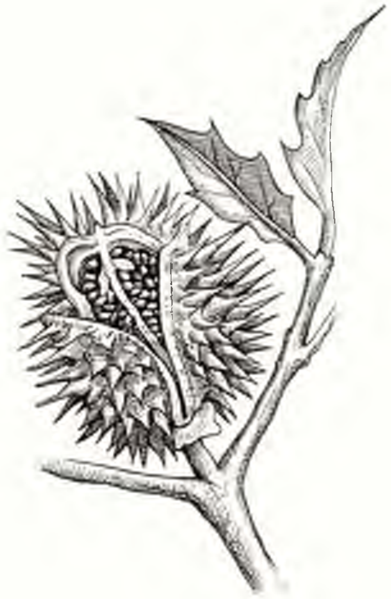
Not all magical uses of thorns and spines are the preserve of malevolent magic; they also have a rich pedigree of protective power. The Chinese word *Keng*, meaning Thorn, also refers to the ability to ward off noxious spirits by exorcism. Among the Buffi marabouts in Morocco thorns are prized for their magical power to throw off and dispell the Evil Eye. A medieval Anglo-Saxon penitential noted a common 'pagan' practice for healing children by passing them through a hole in the earth, then filling in the cavity with thorns. Transylvanian Saxons suspended Rose and other thorn-branches over their farm gates to repel malefic sorcerers on St. George's Day. Similarly, thorns have been used among the Shuswap peoples of British Columbia to keep away the ghosts of the recently deceased. In Italy, a Calabrian charm against malaria demons involves sewing a fragment of the spiny of Barbary Fig (*Opuntia ficus-indica*) also known as a *paletta*, into the clothing of the afflicted person; as it dried, the symptoms would abate.

Glochids, a unique type of tiny spine, are a plant morphology commonly associated with Prickly Pear (*Opuntia*) species, and their harrassment of the skin can range from mild dermatitis to serious injury. Their particular ferocity lies in the fact that exposure to them is often characterized by multiple punctures, in quantities of dozens of spines, due to their small size. Although species of *Opuntia* endemic to the Americas, they have proliferated worldwide; *Opuntia vulgaris* is used magically in Kashmir to keep evil spirits away.

SPINE AND THORN-BEARING SPECIES OF OCCULT SIGNIFICANCE

Acacia (*Acacia* spp.)
Blackberry (*Rubus fruticosus*)
Blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*)
Black Locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*)
Boxthorn (*Lycium* spp.)
Cotoneaster (Cotoneaster spp.)
Hawthorn (*Crataegus* spp.)
Honey Locust (*Gleditsia tricanthos*)
Jujube (*Ziziphus* spp.)
Mesquite (*Prosopis pubescens*)
Prickly Pear (*Opuntia* spp.)
Pyracantha (*Pyracantha* spp.)
Rose (*Rosa* spp.)

There are several ways to appropriately harvest thorns. Individual thorns may be cut with hand shears at the terminus of thorn and branch, and then laid out to air dry for several days. Alternately, a short section of thorn-bearing branch may be cut and dried, and the individual thorns later cut off when dry.



THORN APPLE

Datura stramonium, Datura spp.
Solanaceæ (Nightshade Family)

AMONG herbs of power, few have been more associated with witchcraft and sorcery than Thorn Apple or Devil's Trumpet, and certainly none exceed it as an ill-considered fascination of thrill-seeking imbeciles. The human is first warned of its inner nature by the rank smell of its leaves, which suggests to the olfactory pathways that something is not quite right. We are further warned by the prickles which cover its pods, concealing within a rich cache of poisonous black seeds. Yet, enticing and subtle is the scent of the just-opened flower, lovely and beckoning in appearance. Behind the veils of this subtle beauty saunters a bumptious sprite, taunting and teasing—and wielding hidden knives and poison. Such is the thorn, and such the alluring 'apple': truly this is the Flower of the Mad, the *Fata Morgana* of the vegetal dominion. As a plant associated with fools and derangement, Datura In Haiti, it is sometimes known as the *concombre zombi*, "the Zombie's Cucumber."

There are 13 accepted species of *Datura*, the genus of proper Thorn Apples, which are annuals or herbaceous perennials bearing trumpet-shaped flowers. Jimsonweed (*D. stramonium*) is common in both North America and Europe and is often the plant most associated with the name 'Thorn Apple'. Botanists are divided as to its origin, some believing it to be an Old World species, but others believing it to be endemic to the Americas. J. B. Holtzinger's *Zur Naturgeschishte der Hexen* of 1592 claims the first European cultivation of *Datura stramonium* in 1584, and other sources cite the same in 1583. Documentary evidence shows cultivation of *D. metel* as an ornamental in Europe as early as 1543.

> *Stramonium, which the Turks call tatoula or datoula, produces effects very similar to that of bhang; for, if one gives a little of its seed mixed in wine to persons who are accustomed to its use, it renders them joyful, and fills their imaginations with objects anything but disagreeable.*
>
> NICOLAS VENETTE
> *Tableau de l'Amor Conjugal*, 1814

Usurper of the central nervous system, Thorn Apple is densely suffused with poisons of ethnopharmacological significance, and toxic alkaloids permeate the seeds, flowers, leaves and root. The principle chemical virtues are scopoloamine, hyoscyamine and atropine. Alkaloid content varies considerably from individual to individual. Factors affecting these principles include individual plant genetics, climate, soil, and amount of sunlight. Younger herbs possess more scopolamine, older ones more hyoscyamine. Plants growing in tropical areas are generally more potent, sometimes possessing 4–5 times the amount of alkaloidal wealth of their temperate siblings.

Thorn Apple's action upon the body is anticholinergic, antiasthmatic, antispasmodic, disassociative and deliriant. Effects are characterized by initial stimulation, followed by confusion and the appearance of visions and phantasms. Like Henbane, Belladonna, and other members of the nightshade retinue, *Datura* dilates the pupils, increases thirst and reduces peristalsis, gradually drying all bodily humours. This is generally accompanied by vasodilation, hypertension and the inability to urinate. Overdose gives rise to central narcotic paralysis, coma, and, in sufficient amounts, death. Poisonings have occurred by sucking the nectar from the fresh flowers.

In therapeutic doses, the herb affects the peripheral nervous system and is a reliable bronchiodilator. Thorn Apple has also been used as a specific for the tremor of Parkinsonism, as it balances the ratio of dopamine and choline in the brain. In Ayurvedic medicine, the seeds of *Datura* species have been used as an Aphrodisiac. Thorn Apple was also valued in ritual medicine. A traditional name for the plant in Lithuanian is *dievažolynis* or 'God's Herb'; an archaic Lithuanian fumigant for curing anxiety smudges the patient with seeds of Datura, Peony, and *dagis*, an unidentified, possibly thorny, plant. Roots and leaves of *D. inoxia* used by the Yanadi of India for treating skin conditions. Fray Sagahun reported the Aztec usage of Datura, not only as a religious narcotic, but also as an ointment for the treatment of gout.

In areas of the world where sugar-bearing plants have been fermented into alcoholic beverages such as wine, beer, mead, and chica, Thorn Apple seeds have been a common brewing adjunct (or adulterant) for their stupefying properties. In the 18th century, the Cossacks brewed it into a strongly inebriating beer. Some recipes for Majoon, the classic narcotic electuary of India, were made made with a combination of Datura, Opium, and Cannabis, as well as *ghee* and honey. It was taken internally as an anodyne, but when taken in excess of therapeutic does, could cause euphoria and derangement.

> Mixing the ground seeds in wine will produce an artificial, magic, and fantastic tincture; if a poet would drink of our botanical hypocreme, it would provide him with his most exalted flight in odes...
>
> J. S. HALLE
> *Die Deutsche Giftpflanzenzur*
> *Verhütung der tragischen Vorfalle*, 1784

In various southwestern tribes of North America, *Datura* species were used magically for divination, surgery, protection from venomous beasts, funerary rites, and initiations into manhood. The root was used as a narcotic and anaesthetic by the Zuni.

The indigenous Kawaiisu people of California employed *Datura inoxia* in the *toloache*, or sacred Datura ceremony, to induce dreams and visions, as well as to alleviate pains and swelling. Powers of longevity were attributed to the plant by some, and use of the Datura potion was also employed to divine and locate malefic sorcerers. Though *toloache* was often given to adolescents, its use was not restricted to rites of puberty. For adolesecents undergoing the ritual of *toloache*, a watchful companion, usually an elder, remained by his or her side as a protector due to the intensity of the visionary state incepted. A family celebration often accompanied, though the drinker of the brew was likely too overwhelemed by the plant to notice. In addition to its visonary properties, the *toloache* was also drunk to rapidly heal broken bones.

Toloache was taken in winter, as the plant was regarded as being too strong during other seasons. East-facing roots were chosen and roasted under hot ashes until black, then shredded and placed in a sacred watertight infusing basket, lined with eagle down. Cold water was poured over the roasted roots, which were soaked from sunrise to sunset, during which the basket was moved gradually in a westerly direction.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF THORN APPLE

Enticement, Chicanery, Fragmentation, Dysmorphia,
Exsiccation, Stiffness, Phantasms, Waylaid
Flesh, Asymmetric Risk, Confusio
Linguarum, Chain Reaction,
Cerebral Fracture, and
Lethal Blunder.

*

Its occult powers are legion, chief among them being Madness, Lust, Illumination, Allure, Divination, Success in Gambling, Potentiation, Bidding, Beast Charming, Triumph, and Protection from Maleficia. Generally, it is associated with the tortuous and malefic characteristics of Saturn.

One Romany divination system employs the *covaçanescro buçlo*, or Witch-Drum, a simple tambourine covered with the skin of a beast, inscribed with magical markings. A number of Thorn Apple seeds are placed on the drum head, which is then lightly struck with a small hammer. The diviner then reads an augury from the position of the seeds.

In India, *Datura metel* is a traditional offering to Shiva. A sexual ointment in *The Kama Sutra* for bewitching a woman annoints the linga with a mixture of ground Thorn Apple seeds and honey. When the man goes to her, she will be "Caught in his power." The poison is also part of the ritual accouterments of the Thuggee cult of Kali, whose members have used it to stupefy their victims before killing them for the goddess.

D. metel is used in West African sorcery for divination and ritual inebriation. Under the name known as Mondzo, Datura is employed by the magicians of northern Transvaal and Mozambique to excorcise intrusive spirits, to reveal sorcerers of ill intent; it was also used in young womens' nubility rites.

Certain Native American charms employed root of Thorn Apple, carried on the person, as a potent gambling talisman; the seeds were eaten while gambling to increase their clarivoyant powers. During initiation rites of the Algonquian-speaking tribes the seeker, having ingested Thorn Apple, was visited by spirits of Ancestors and Beasts who revealed to them special songs, as well as particulars about their past lives and future paths. Native Americans employed washed their horses with an infusion of *Datura meteloides* to prevent them from straying. Thorn-apple leaves placed in the crown of a hat are an Ozark charm against sunstroke and apoplexy.

In Mexico up unto the present day, the flowers of Thorn Apple species have been used in love charms and aphrodisiacs. In Mexican folk magic, women gave it to errant lovers to induce dementia; the spirit of Toloache (*D. innoxia*) is regarded as malevolent in character.

Dr. Ludwig Mejer's 1882 book *Die Periode der Hexenprocesse* asserts that European witches stupefied themselves with a philtre decocted of *D. stramonium*, which brought on phantasmagoric visions and dreams so impressive that, when sober, they believed them to be real. Among chemists, hyoscyamine is thought to be the principle responsible for "sensations of flight" as arising from nightshade-derived witchcraft ointments and brews.

CORRESPONDENCES

Essence: Illusion.
Powers: Allure, Madness, Vision, and Potentiation.
Planets: Saturn, Venus and the Moon.
Deific Forms: Kali, Io, Dionysus, Shiva.

Therapeutic: Revelation.
Affliction: Delusion/Dissociation.
Atavistic Power: Theandry.
Domain: Scorched Earth.
Emblem: A richly adorned queen sits upon a throne of skulls. At her feet, a sleeper lies deep in dream.

THREE-LOBED SAGE

Salvia fruticosa
Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

A BUSHY, hirsute Sage native to arid Mediterannean plant communities nearing one meter in height. Having disproportionately tall inflorescences relative to its crown, its flowers are white to pale lavender or salmon, with palmate leaves, the top three quite pronounced, hence its name. It is also known as Greek Sage, or Cretan White Sage. With an aromatic profile similar to Lavender—though slightly more camphoraceous—it is often passed in commerce as Culinary Sage, which is more commonly understood to be *Salvia officinalis*. Its scent, when dried, is more concentrated, and if stored properly it respectably retains its scent. Grown in culinary and medicinal gardens, its flowers are, like many Salvias, favored by bees. Once established it is drought tolerant, though the soil must be well drained.

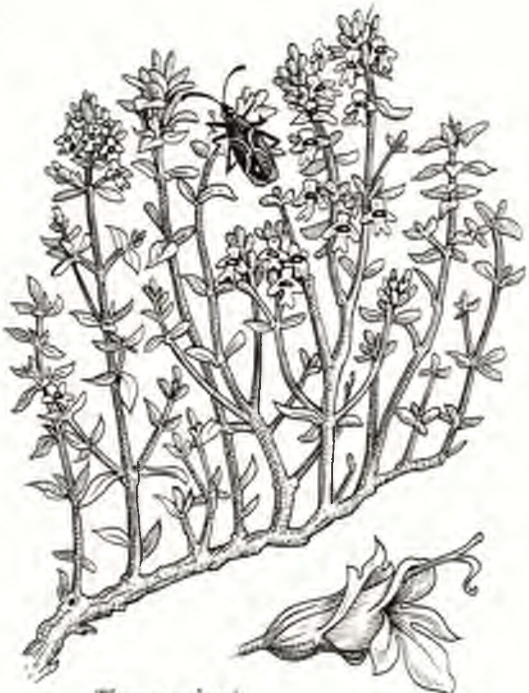
In the Levant, it enjoys a singular reputation as a plant giving blessing to the dead. Garlands of it are placed on graves, and sometimes its leaves cover the corpse. A mixture of Three-Lobed Sage leaves with Barley is burned as an incense against demons and evil presences in some Muslim funerary rites. The leaves alone are also burned for this purpose for this purpose as an incense of power. Though uncommon in American gardens, it is a worthy plant for magical and folkloric use, and it is becoming more available through specialty nurseries.

THYME

Thymus spp.
Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

A CREEPING, aromatic perennial forming mats, with pink, white, mauve or purple flowering heads. *Thymus vulgaris* has lilac-colored flowers. The herb was originally native to Spain and the Mediterranean area. Genus *Thymus* contains about 320 species of perennial herbs and shrubs, most fragrant and valuable for culinary and medicinal use. Asexually, it is easily propagated by layering, and thrives in sunny rock gardens. In Greece, various Thyme species are of critical importance for the production of honey, such as *T. capitatus*.

The valuable portions are the leaves, flowers, and essential oil. In folk healing, it possesses an astounding congregration of powers, being at once a secretolytic, disinfectant, expectorant, antispasmodic, antispetic, antioxidant, digestive, febrifuge, nervine, fungicide, and hepatic. Early-stage throat infections may be checked with astonishing efficacy by regular gargling of a strong Thyme infusion. Externally, the essential oil may be used for minor injuries, burns, dermatitis, and scabies. The aromatic constituents of Thyme include the eponymous Thymol ($C_{10}H_{14}O$), an antibacterial, as well as carvicrol, cymene, linalol, camphene, terpinene, geraniol, citral, and thuyanol.



Thymus vulgaris

> Truly, experience teaches us that all melancholics are occupied with horrible contagions. The malicious humor has its origin in the spleen, and its fumes ascend through channels in the body until they reach the brain, and they move the fantasy and the imagination, and fabricate horrible fantasms

> with the perturbation of the intellect while asleep, and while awake they think horrible things... The cure for them lies in the use of our fifth essence or in its addition to those medicines, that is to say the fumigations, the centaurea major, epithimus, thyme, lapis lazuli, black hellebore.
>
> RAYMUND DE TARREGA
> *De Secretis Naturae Sive Quinta Essentia,* 1514

All species of the plant receive their planetary dispensation from the Sun, but also possess certain qualities of Venus and Mercury. Its occult properties are Allure, Beneficence, Healing, Wealth and Protection. The plant has also long been used as an offertory herb, in funerary rites, and for causing death.

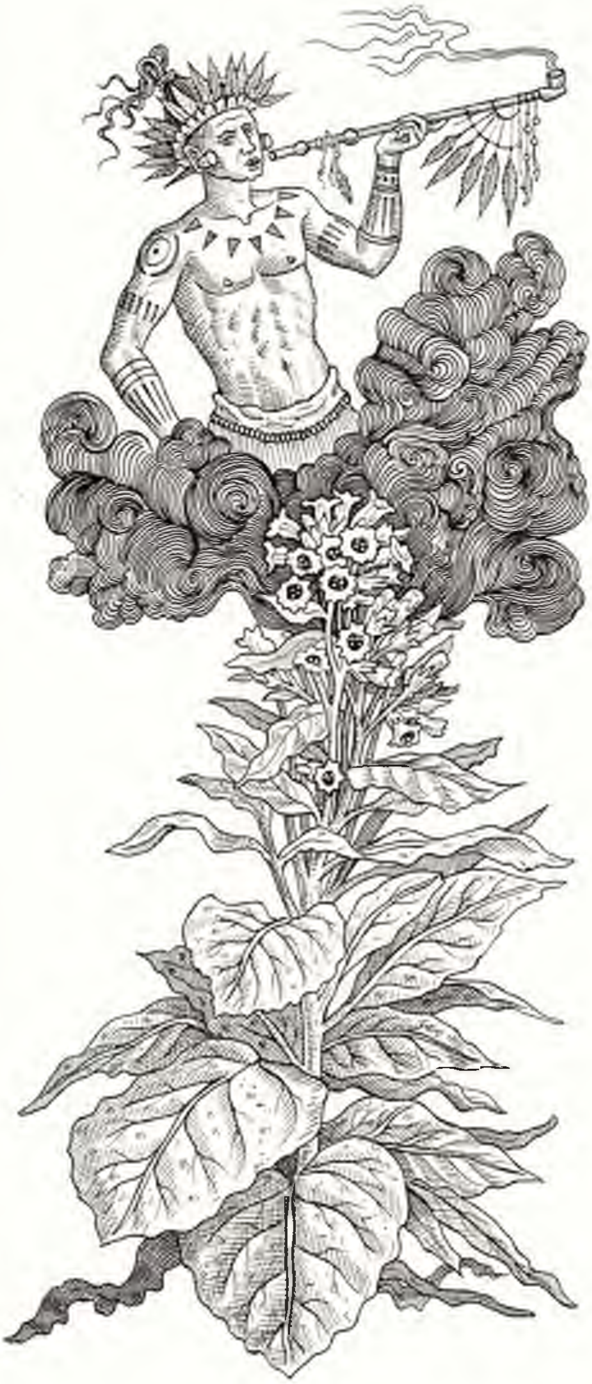
The ancient Greeks used Thyme as a talisman to guard against disease-causing spirits, and the Egyptians valued it in the embalming process. In Morocco, it was widely used as a fumigant against illness. A bundle of sprigs placed under the pillow is an old charm against intruding nocturnal spirits, as well as helping to allay unseemly dreams. As a strewing herb, Thyme was used in ancient Greece as a prophylactic against scorpions.

Wild Thyme, also known by its old name of Serpolet (*Thymus serpyllum*) was regarded with caution by the Romany in some areas of the British Isles; its presiding spirit was reckoned as malevolent. A spell to hasten someone's death or to afflict them with disease involves cutting a sprig of this herb and bringing it in to the house of the intended victim. It was occasionally used as a funerary sprig in Lincolnshire.

Flowering tops of *T. mastichina*, a species native to Portugal and Spain, have enjoyed use against the Evil Eye and witchcraft in Spanish folk magic. This Thyme is also burned for a purifying aromatic smoke on the night of June 11, the Feast of San Juan de Sahagun, as well as for other instances of incense-purification.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF THYME

Clarity, Encouragement, Retraction, Woe, Disinfection, Spiced Aridity, Idyllic Libido, Stalwart Vigor, Verduous Munitions, Virid Phalanxes, Righteous Execration, Meritorious Physic, and Elfin Comportment.



TOBACCO

Nicotiana spp. esp. *Nicotiana tabacum*
Solanaceæ (Nightshade Family)

GENUS *Nicotiana* contains over 60 species of annual and perennial herbs, shrubs and small trees. They bear elliptical or ovate leaves, tubular flowers of various colors; the fruits are capsules producing tiny and abundant seeds. Tobaccos are mostly native to the Americas, but also emerged in Australia, Africa and the South Pacific. Most species are wild, but some are cultivated for their alkaloid content, as garden ornamentals, or both. As with many nightshades, the whole of the plant is hairy, sticky and aromatic, producing an aggressive yet stimulating odor.

Tobacco has answered to countless names, among them Petun, Patem, Picietl, Queen's Herb, Sacred Herb, and Peto. Its Nahuatl name *Iyetl* yields the meaning "to offer something in sacrifice to a deity; to cense." The Aztecs sometimes referred to Tobacco as *Chiucnauhpatlamatelolli* or the "Nine-Times-Crumbled-in-the-Hands-One".

As a drug, it is a wrathful deity, a source of diverse, pure and concentrated chemical powers. Within the body, it acts as a stimulant, tranquilizer, narcotic, visionary, and laxative. Taken in small quantities, it is sedative in action; in excess it gives rise to derangement, depression, vertigo, and convulsions. Medically, it has been employed as a muscle relaxant, especially in digestive and urinary blockages. Native American healers prepared a salve for wounds compounded of Tobacco and Elder leaves fried in butter, and the leaves have enjoyed a reputation for clearing pimples and other blights of the skin. The herb is not much taken through the gateway of the stomach due to the nausea it produces but is sometimes administered in the form of a clyster.

The herb is a rich source of alkaloids, including nicotine, nor-nicotine, anabasine, nicotyrine, and piperidine, as well as coumarins and flavones. Though nicotine in concentration is a deadly poison, the accumulation of plant tars in the throat and lungs is to blame for the disease and rottenness of those organs arising as a consequence of excessive smoking.

Tobacco is aligned with the planetary attributes of Mars, participating in the arenas of fire, smoke, destruction, acquisition and decisive action. Its powers in ceremony are Beneficence, Wealth, Potentiation, Summoning, Oblation, Warfare, Hunting, Weather Working, Death, Divination, and as a Funerary herb. It is also regarded in some traditions as an ally for women during childbirth.

The Spirit-Retinue of Tobacco

Council, Rapprochement, Retribution, Vindication, Parley, Rapid Thought, Infernal Vapor, Boorish Stench, Mental Coalescence, Tactical Manœuvre, Ferocious Slaughter, Diabolic Pact, and Hostile Accusation.

The great storehouse of Tobacco rituals proceeds from the Americas where the plant was widely venerated. The herb was both burned as incense, and strewn. It was thrown into fires as an offering, suffumigated into the air for spirit-offerings, and sprinkled in the waters as a charm for catching fish. Amongst native peoples from the Caribbean southward, large cigars of the herb were used as a smudge for fumigating afflicted patients. In indigenous American rites, Tobacco is frequently used in combination with other herbs, including Birch Bark, buds of *Protium* (Copal) species, Echinacea, Sassafrass Root, Willow Bark, *Tagetes* species such as Pericon, Coca, Angel's Trumpet, Aloe, Uva Ursi, Papaya Leaves, shredded Peyote, and Styrax resin.

Among the Navajo and Pueblo, Tobacco, along with corn kernels and pollen, were a sacred offering for the gods. A ceremonial Aztec ablution known as *limpia* was made by grinding dried, bright-green leaves of *Nicotiana rustica* and rubbing the resulting verdant powder on the stomach, temples, legs, and forearms. The Tewa and Omaha used the power of the leaves for success in hunting. In Brazil, Tobacco is frequently used in the Candomblé abô, or sacred magical baths.

In the creation lore of the Kawaiisu peoples of California, Tobacco was one of the Four Great Medicines bequeathed to the people by the spirits, along with along with Nettles, Datura, and red ants. Magically, strong preparations of Tobacco were used to provoke dreaming, either by smoking or eating. Burning fumes were one of the best ways of driving away ghosts and malevolent spirits, including the reprehensible *yaahw'era*, whose presence was dispelled by casting tobacco into a fire. Another means of setting an *unipi* (evil spirit) to flight was by placing powdered *so'odi* (Tobacco) on the back of the hand betwixt thumb and forefinger, and then blowing it in all directions.

An important strand of magical usage linked the Tobacco spirit with meteorological phenomena. Among the native peoples of Virginia, Tobacco was scattered as a charm against storms and lightning. The Tewa and San Juan tribes employed the fragrant leaves to nourish and propitiate the rain gods, in order to ensure their favour and hasten rainfall. Tobaccos were used by the Seminoles for the magical control of storms and lightning, especially for driving them away. In one Kawaiisu legend, a bird-shaman manipulates the weather by use of Tobacco.

After the European incursion into North America, the plant made its way to Europe, not only as a drug of personal use for pleasure, but also as a numinous plant adopted into magical practices. In Ireland, it was given as an offering to the Sidhe, together with whiskey, potatoes or milk. In Romania, a suspected vampire was restrained by walking around its the grave, exhaling the smoke from a cigarette, cigar, or pipe, on the anniversary of the suspect's death.

If the French Inquisitor Pierre DeLancre is to be believed, Tobacco was even appropriated by the Basque witches and used at their sabbats. Writing in his 1612 tract *On the Inconstancy of Witches*, he decried its foul odor, remarking:

> Thus these herbs make them smell wild and cause them to stink... They enjoy even more kissing the Devil, who is believed to assume the form of a stinking goat, on that dirty part of his rear end when they present their adoration, just as they kiss their husbands on the mouth.

Despite the enthusiasm of the plant's early European adopters, prohibition was not far behind. In some areas of Europe, Tobacco smoking was punished by amputation of the offender's nose, and certain popes such as Urban VIII sought to discourage use of Tobacco by threatening excommunication.

> He that is master of so rich a store
> May laugh at Crœsus and esteeme him poore;
> And with his smokie scepter in his fist,
> Securely flout the toyling Alchymist,
> Who daily labours with a vain expense
> In distillations of the quint-essence,
> Not knowing that this golden hearbe alone
> Is the Philosophers admired stone.
>
> SIR JOHN BEAUMONT
> *The Metamorphosis of Tabacco*, 1602

For its potentiation, either as an intoxicant or as an aromatic, the leaves are dried, then slowly fortified with a broth decocted from new-gathered or dried plant portions. The same may be done with the flowers, whose virtue is lesser known but of higher estate. For this, a vessel specially reserved for its keeping should be prepared, and the plant material gradually moistened over time. This aromatic enrichment also increases its toxicity, and so care should be taken during usage.

TORCHWOOD

KNOWN botanically as the Burseraceæ, the Torchwood Family comprises some 16 genera and 500 individual trees and shrubs. Important genera include *Boswellia* (Frankincenses); *Commiphora* (Myrrhs and Bdelliums); *Canarium* (Elemis) and *Protium* (Copals). The genus *Bursera* also produces copal resins. Almost all family members are endemic to equatorial regions; typical characteristics include fragrant medicinal resins gathered by deliberate wounding of the trunk; these in turn have antibacterial properties and magico-religious significance in diverse rites and formulae of fumigation. Most resins of the family are regarded as prophylactic, an affront to noxious spirits, a fragrance pleasing to gods and beneficent spirits, or both. Many, though not all, members of the family are squat and gnarled in appearance.

TORMENTIL

Potentilla erecta

Rosaceæ (Rose Family)

CREEPING on sodden meadows, heaths and moors, Tormentil grows to 5–50 cm in height, with four-petaled yellow flowers. Its rhizome is distinctive, being large, stocky and striated, and when cut it bleeds a red fluid, hence one of its common names, Bloodroot. Tormentil root is used to create the distinctive bitter German liqueur *Blutwurz*, as well as other alcoholic preparations in Russia, Belarus and in Ukraine. It also excels as an ingredient in bitters. The dried root, as encountered in commerce, is often of poor quality, thus it is a welcome presence in the medicine garden that can accommodate its very specific cultural conditions.

Its actions on the body are astringent and febrifuge. Folk medicine has valued it for arresting loose bowels, as well as a topical on wounds, readily accomplished through the binding power of tannins, which the rhizome is rich in. In former times, it was also used for treating jaundice and rheumatism, and arresting excessive menstruation. In medieval Europe, small pinches of root powder taken in wine were used in salvific draughts against the plague. Used often in Norwegian folk medicine and healing, wherein it bears the name *tepperot* (stopper root). The root has been found to have immunostimulant properties.

The boiled root was much valued as a natural dye and tanning agent, yielding colors in a range from burnt orange to violet-brown, yielded with alum and iron mordants, respectively. Tormentil root has been used in Ireland to replace oak in the tanning process. Tormentil root was also employed in some situations as a vegetable rennet for curdling milk.

Botanically, Tormentil it is a true Cinquefoil; it therefore participates in that complex of power known as the *Vegetal Hand*, which casts forth power, but also restrains it. To herbalists of old, it was accorded the powers of Mars, both of the planet and the god, on account of its red color, but this attribution also aligns with its propensity to disrupt and neutralize witchcraft and intrusive spirits. In the human body its power was aligned with blood, and the heart.

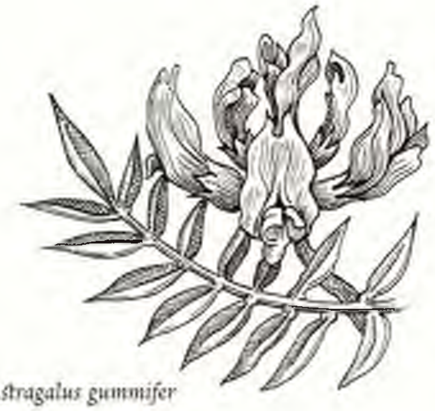
Its magical powers relate primarily to binding and stoppage, virtues aligned with, and proceeding from, its tannic potency. Other magical powers ascribed it are Bidding, Exorcism, Warfare, Triumph, and Revenge. In Romania, Tormentil is regarded a powerful sorcerous panacea.

TRAGACANTH

Astragalus gummifer

Fabaceæ (Pea Family)

TRAGACANTH is a hardy leguminous shrub native to arid and mountainous areas of western Asia, growing to half a meter in height and bearing spines. Its liquid gum is exuded after the trunk is wounded, and this milky fluid dries into small crescent-shaped tears with a bland taste. Owing to its mucilaginous vitrtues, Tragacanth was often an ingredient in ancient mithridates. Its common name is derived from the Greek *tragos* meaning goat, and *akantha*, signifying horn; the generic name *astragalus* means 'milk-bone.' Incisions made on the plant produce the gum, which hardens on exposure to air. Tears traditionally harvested in this ancient manner are generally yellow to golden-brown in color; modern methods of harvest and processing yield a white or bone-colored product. Gum which has exuded from natural injuries is known as vermiform tragacanth, for its wormlike coils, or as amber-colored irregular tears. In modern commerce it is often found as a ground white or off-white powder.



Astragalus gummifer

Its gum is one of the most potent plant hydrocolloids, and it enjoyed an ancient reputation for use in cosmetics. Used as an emulsifying agent for oils and resins, it is an important ingredient in incense making for its strong powers of binding. Its occult powers are Binding, Harmony, and Oblation, and it is aligned with the Alchemical concept of *Coagulum*.

TUBEROSE

Polianthes tuberosa

Asparagaceæ (Asparagus Family)

A BULBOUS plant to 75 cm in height, the Tuberose bears fragrant, pale-white flower clusters are borne on enlogated spikes, bearing some resemblance to Hyacinths, with whom it shares a taxonomic family. Its short stature, however, belies the power of its fragrance, an aroma which has seduced another species—*Homo sapiens*—to its thrall. Botanically it is kindred to the Agaves, as much for its intoxicating properties as for the substance of its genome; in former taxonomical schema it was classed in the family Amaryllidaceae, then the Agave Family. Native to Mexico, the Tuberose's original Nahuatl name is Omixochitl—the *bone-flower*; a name evoked both by the flower's color and the shape of its opening bud. In addition to Tuberose, the genus *Polianthes* contains 16 other species, all found in the wild—except for *P. tuberosa*. This suggests a very ancient association with humans, making it a cultigen. The flower appeared in the 16th century Florentince Codex compiled by Bernardino de Sahagún.

Its primary use is as an aromatic, either in perfume, or used in an oil for tactile arousal, elsewise a cut flower to garland the body. Tuberose is now a major worldwide crop in floriculture, grown for uses as diverse as perfume industry and Hawaiian lei, where it is known as Kupaloke. The aromatic principles, which are extraordinarily complex, are extracted in Tuberose absolute, and frequently used in perfumery.

Its distinctive fragrance is heady, sweet, sensuous and mesmeric, with a tendency to charm, but easily overwhelm. As Tuberose is a nocturnal bloomer, the flowers release their scent after dusk, which has given rise to folk epithets approximating 'Lady of the Night'. This aligns the plant in many respects with the *Succubus*, the nocturnal spirit of unbridled female sexuality which fixated and tormented male Christian ascetics. Yet the evil associated with this spirit was not intrinsic to her, but to that deranged soul and body that denied her, and to the appalling aspects of his own religion.

As a perfume, the plant has traditionally been regarded as an aphrodisiac, thus its esoteric properties are that of Allure, the sorcerous heart of the love-charm. It excels in massage unguents and oils for ritual anointing, prepared using high-quality Tuberose Absolute.

The Spirit-Retinue of Tuberose

Exquisiteness, Temptation, Swooning, Inveiglement, Seduction, Delirium, Titillation, Arousal, Enamorment, Unctuous Ardor, Crepuscular Allure, Naked Bewitchment, Transfixion, and Rhapsodic Delight.

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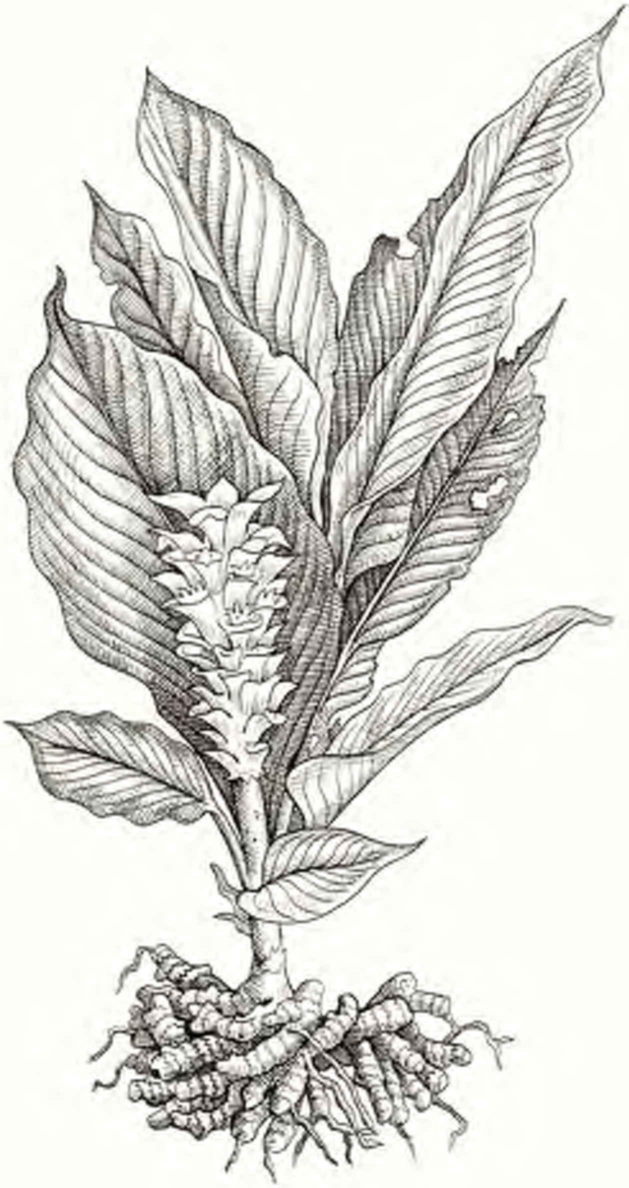


TURMERIC

Curcuma longa

Zingiberaceæ (Ginger Family)

A TALL, stemless tropical herb with pale yellow flowers and a fleshy, palmate rhizome bearing aromatic flesh of a deep golden color. It is native to India and prefers watery or sodden habitats. Like many of the Ginger kin, this plant's reproductive capabilities have suffered over the millennia due to cultivation, and now it is almost exclusively propagated vegetatively. The genus *Cucurma* contains about 90 separate species, mostly tropical in origin.

The rhizome yields a strong yellow dye. Recent investigations into imported Turmeric sold as a spice in North America has revealed some sources that were adulterated with lead chromate ($PbCrO_4$) to enhance the powdered rhizome's bright yellow color. This practice of using lead and chromium compounds to enhance brightness of hue has been documented with other spices such as Hungarian Paprika. In view of this, one is advised to procure the herb from a reputatble supplier, buy fresh root, or grow it oneself.

A time-honored herb in Ayurvedic medicine, Turmeric is used internally for bilious conditions, as its colour would suggest, its action being digestive and hepatic. Externally, the rhizome is applied to cuts, bruises, sprains, and swollen joints. In Saudi Arabia it is known as *al-Kurkum*, used in traditional medicine as a hepatotonic. In Libya, among its many folk-medicinal uses, it was prescribed for amnesia. Concentrated in the rhizome are an admixture of potent compounds including curcuminoids, tumerone, and sesquiterpene ketones inculding ar-turmerone, zingiberine, borneol, and phellandrene.

Allied in classic planetary correspondence to the Sun, the native elemental power of Tumeric is Fire, tempered by Water. Its heat is thus of the sustaining type, which animates and preserves the body, and promotes homeostasis. It also contains aspects of Venus and Jupiter due to its longstanding quality of auspiciousness, celebration, and aesthetic. Its occult principles are Beneficence, Fertility, Protection from Noxious Spirits, and use as a funereal plant. It may also be used as a ritual coloration for the skin.

In India, a whole root may be used as a talisman for protection against fascination. Perfumed Tumeric was used to dust the body of the King in the Royal Baths, and in eastern India, root of the related Wild Tumeric (*Curcuma aromatica*) was tied to the neck or waist as a talisman against fever. As a charm of beneficence and protection, a swastika of Tumeric or Saffron may be drawn on the feet of a Hindu bride or groom, or their parents. The whole root of the plant, as well as its powder, is also known as an effective power against the Evil Eye.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF TURMERIC

Elation, Modulation, Rectification, Congeniality, Comfort, Composure, Adornment, Provision, Conviviality, Auspicious Occasion, Connubial Delight, Effusive Warmth, and Luminous Alacrity.

⁂

TURPENTINE BROOM

Thamnosma montana

Rutaceæ (Rue Family)

KNOWN also as Desert Rue, Turpentine Broom is a perennial shrub with densely clustered broom-like stems and tiny leaves, growing to 60 cm. A late winter to early spring bloomer, its dark violet flowers give way to green fruit capsules, which serve as food for desert wildlife. It thrives in open desert washes of the Southwestern United States and Mexico, preferring Joshua Tree and Creosote Bush plant communites, and Pinyon-Juniper woodland. The genus *Thamnosa* contains at least 7 species, some of which contain important phytotoxins and medicinal compounds.

As an herb of spirit-power, Turpentine Broom was used by the Kawaiisu peoples of the California deserts for tracking and hunting deer. Hunters placed the plant into the tracks of deer to slow the animals' progress. Powdered, it was used as protection from snakes, while infusions were drunk for their visionary properties.

UMBELLIFERÆ

IN botanical taxonomy, it was the former name for Dill and Carrot family, so named for umbels, the distinctive inflorescences common to the family. Because of the usefulness of the classification, and its broad botanical scope, may botanists continue to use it privately, referring to its members as umbelifers.

The group includes such important plant allies as Asafœtida, Dill, Fennel, Galbanum, Poison and Water Hemlock, Heracleum, and Parsley. Common characteristics of the family include various alkaloids proven venomous to humans, uterine-stimulating properties, and compounds chemically related to MDMA. The family contains about 250 genera and 2800 species. In many parts of the British Isles, umbellifers as a whole were historically considered baneful, possibly because of the sinister reputation of Poison

Hemlock, and other 'noxious' species such as Hogweed (*Heracleum* spp).

In the time of the botanist Theophrastus (370–288 BCE), there rose to great fame an umbellifer with great reputation as an oral contraceptive for women. Native to a tiny portion of North Africa in what is now Libya, the plant was called *Silphion* by the Greeks, and later *Silphium* by the Romans. Silphium was a member of the genus *Ferula*, which also includes Galbanum and Asafœtida. According to Theophrastus, the plant was discovered by Greek colonists founding the coastal city of Cyrene in the seventh century BCE. Because attempts at cultivating the plant failed, the Cyrenians became the sole exporters of the plant. Demand for the plant in the ancient world was so great that by the first century AD. Pliny the Elder wrote in *Natural History* that Silphium was worth more than its weight in silver. By the 3rd or 4th century Silphium was extinct from overharvesting, forcing Europeans to turn to Asafœtida, which was not nearly as effective.

Another curious umbellifer is the Water Parsnip (*Sium suave*), a plant sharing many of the same habitats as the Hemlocks. Among the Flambeau Ojibwe, the seed of Water Parsnip was smoldered over a fire to banish and blind Sokenau, the evil spirit that interferes with hunting. Various European species of Water-Parsnips appeared from time to time in old Flying Ointment recipes, but the name could also refer to the roots of Poison Hemlock (*Conium* spp.) of Cowbane (*Cicuta* spp.).

UVA URSI

Arctostaphylos uva-ursi

Ericaceæ (Heather Family)

BEARBERRY, part of large genus of shrubs native to North America known as Manzanitas, is a hardy, compact evergreen shrub growing to 40 cm high, with leathery leaves conspicuous red fruits. Highly adapted to diverse environments, many individuals can thrive at a height of only 10 cm. There are numerous subspecies and cultivars of Uva Ursi available through horticulture and native plant nurseries.

The roots, leaves and fruit are the parts used. Its leaves are astringent and diuretic; the fruits have been used as a laxative. It has been recommended in the place of ergot of rye for purposes of aiding uterine contraction in labour. Uva Ursi fruits were traditionally dried as a food, made into jelly, and may also be fermented into mead or hedge-wine.

Among the celestial powers it allied with the Sun, that influence under which it thrives best, and its powers in magic and ceremony are Purification, Summoning, and Fortification. The leaves of the shrub enjoyed wide use for smoking, and it was often, but not always, added to tobacco, used for pleasure, ceremony, or to attract beneficent spirits. Although Uva Ursi has been called by the name Kinnick Kinnick, the Algonquian word denotes any smoking mixture. Roots of the shrub were used as a Hunting Medicine by the Chippewa, smoked in pipes for attracting game. The Ramah Navajo used the leaf decoction as a ceremonial emetic.

Uva Ursi Smoking Blend

Uva Ursi, young leaves, dried	2 parts
Wild Cherry, bark	1 part
Nictotiana rustica, cured	1 part

❡ Shred all plant materials fine, blend and inter in a wooden tobacco humidor or sealed tin, with a few drops of dark rum to moisten. Allow the mixture to rest several days before use in a pipe. Over time the blend may be seasoned and stirred with the addition of small amounts of rum to develop flavor and keep it moist.

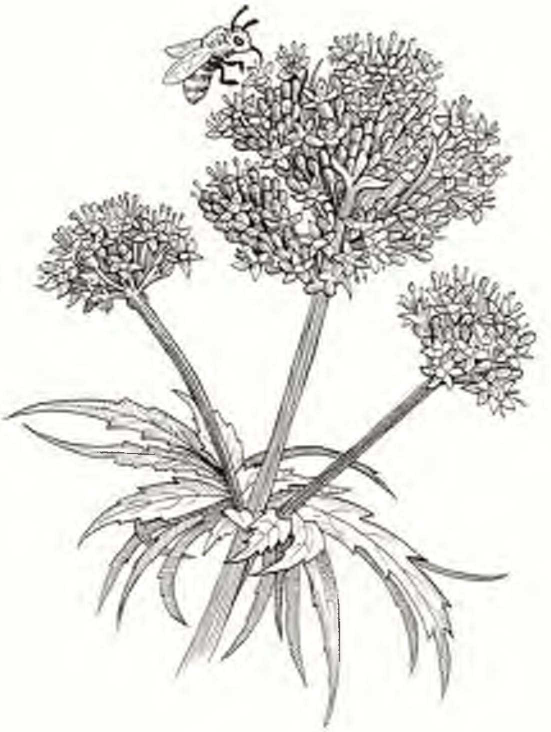
VALERIAN

Valeriana officinalis

Valerianaceæ (Valerian Family)

VALERIAN thrives in ditches and damp wallows throughout Europe, and in some areas of North America. It reaches a height of 1.5 meters, producing pink and white flowers which are honey-scented, with a secondary, unnerving odor lying beneath. The smell arising from the root is earthy, spicy, and musky. This aroma degrades considerably upon drying. Usually, the root is the portion used; occasionally the essential oil of the root or leaf is available.

Its action upon the body is anodyne, antispasmodic, nervine, stomachic, and hypnotic. The tea or tincture of the root may be employed against unrestfulness, and disturbances of the sleep. It provokes a mild euphoria and relaxation; Standardized extracts of Valerian now available are most efficacious for nervous tension, insomnia, and other night restlessness. Some modern laboratory tests show antitumor activity.

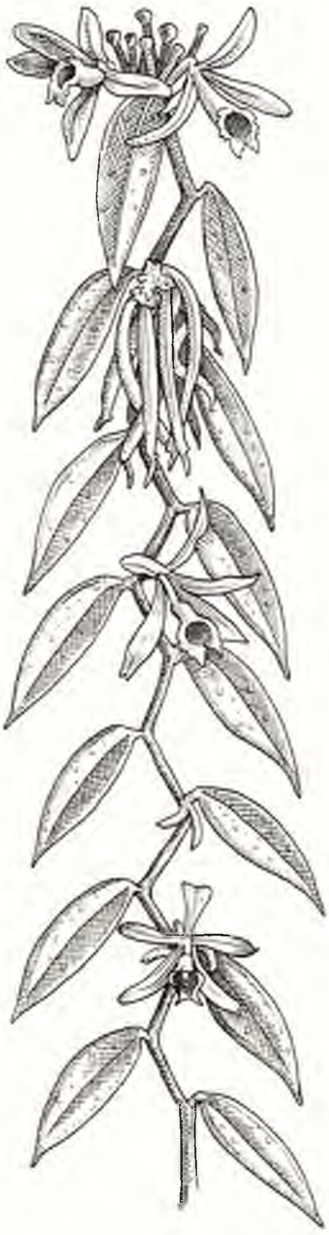


It is ruled by Mercury, with additional Lunar emanation on account of its mild narcosis. Its magical powers are protection from evil spirits, invisibility, wealth, protection from disease, curse-lifting, protection from lightning, success in business, and beast-charming.

A medieval incense to conjure "a prince of Spirits of ye ayre" combined juice of Hypericon (*Hypericum*), Saffron, Artemisia, and Valerian root. Powders of Valerian, both dried and burnt, were used in love magic. A decoction of the root may be used in philtres to increase clarivoyant or oracular powers. In India, the related species *Valeriana wallichii* and *V. hardwickii* were burned as powerful incenses. Roots of Valerian were sometimes hung on or over doorways to prevent the entrance of witches and demons.

The herb has some repute as an ally for beast-charming. An oil prepared from Valerian and Anise was used by Gypsies of the British Isles to pacify belligerent dogs. Both cats and dogs enjoy eating the dried root, whereupon they become exceedingly gay; elsewise a nervous or hyperactive animal is rendered sedate. Horses and rats are known to relish this root as well.

In the border areas between Poland and Ukraine Valerian was known as *wodolon* and was regarded as the star-crossed lover of Monkshood (*Aconitum* spp.). If the two plants did not grow near each other, neither would thrive.



VANILLA

Vanilla planifolia

Orchidaceæ (Orchid Family)

A TROPICAL orchid, growing as a vine with a yellow-white flower, and a long, black aromatic seed pod erroneously referred to as a 'bean'. Plants 2–13 years of age may begin to flower. In the wild, pollination of the Vanilla Orchid can occur only through a stingless bee of the genus *Melipona*. Under cultivation, the flowers must be hand-pollinated; if the healthy, plants will bear fruit for 30–40 years. The genus *Vanilla* contains about 105 species. Ruination of wild habitat by human encroachment has resulted in the species becoming categorized as endangered in the wild.

The plant corresponds with the planetary attributes of Venus; its plant powers are Allure, Beneficence, Potentiation, and Vampirism. It has a reputation as an aphrodisiac, and also excels as a Love Charm.

Vanilla is classed as an aromatic stimulant; as a folk medicine, it has been used to treat impotence. Known to the Aztecs as Tlilxochitl, it was used to promote menstruation and assist the expulsion of miscarriages. Vanilla was also thought to possess power against poisonous animals.

Its erotic allure and consanguinous virtues are exemplified in chocolate, in whose ancient formulations, as well as modern ones, it copulates with to produce a divine child. Given its rarity as a botanical, its efficacy in commingling with other aromatics, and its propensity for uplifting them as a result of these unions, Vanilla is wholly undeserving of the low metaphor in American English associating it with sexual blandness. Because Vanilla is a parasite, and requires a host to feed, its character is aligned more precisely with a Succubus, that alluring spirit which, though libidinous and beautiful, must drain its paramour.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF VANILLA

Pleasure, Sensuality, Nubility, Commixtion, Prepossession, Enthrallment, Engorgement, Willing Indulgence, Rapt Seduction, Mirthful Idyll, Promiscuous Liaison, Explicit Display, and Sacred Whoredoms.

VERVAIN

Verbena officinalis

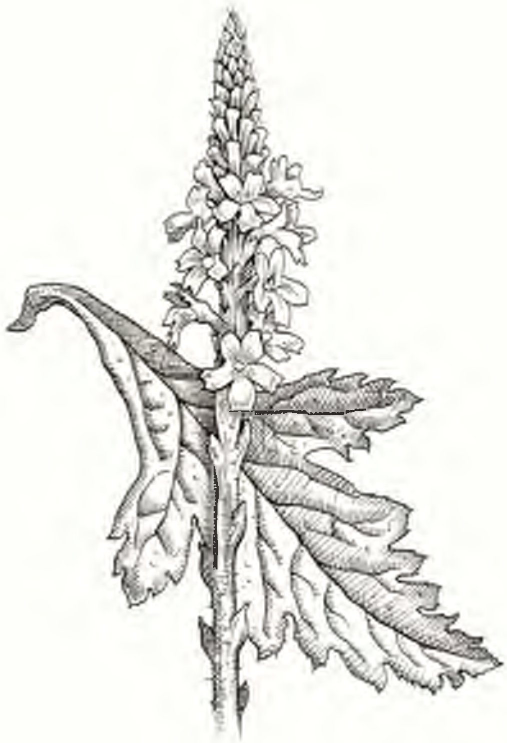
Verbenaceæ (Vervain Family)

A HARDY perennial herb rising to 1 meter in height, with small flower spikes of pink or purple in Midsummer. Vervain is easily grown in the garden, but where soil is sandy, and with a horticultural hand bordering on neglect, the plant becomes weedy and may easily infest. Though the plant is mentioned much in the magical literature of the ancients, the botanical taxonomy of the exact Vervain known to the Greeks and Romans is uncertain. V. *officinalis* is the Verbena known to European folklore from the medieval period onward. European alchemists knew it as Vena Veneris.

LITANY OF NAMES

Enchanter's Plant
Herb-Grace
Hiera Botane
Mercuries Moyst Bloud
Holy Herb
Juno's Tears
Simpler's Joy
Pisteron
Herba Veneris
Dragon's Claw
Devil's Bane

Much of the scents in cosmetics and toiletries which today is attributed to 'Verbena' derives not from this plant at all, but the unrelated *Aloysia triphylla*, also known to gardeners as 'Lemon Verbena'.



The ærial portions are generally the parts used, and sometimes the juices of the entire plant. Its action on the body is hepatic, vermifuge, galactagogue, emmenagogue, febrifuge, and anti-asthmatic. Decoctions are used for sore throats, as well as virtuous eyewash and hair tonic. Vervain Tea is liver-supportive, and it may thus be employed in the treatment of jaundice. One of its most virtuous actions is in stimulation of organ systems, and it has been used as a medicament for promotion of menses. Some modern research has indicated Vervain's potential as a cardiotonic and anti-tumour agent. Though marvellous in healing powers, Vervain's use in folk medicine has diminished much over the past few centuries; this may be due to hostile Christian influences, partially because of the herb's association with sorcery and its reputation as a 'Witch's Herb'.

As magical medicine, the root was used for binding demons responsible for internal tumors: the root was hung around the patient's neck, while one end of it was held over smoke. By understaking this procedure, the root the tumor was thought to dry and shrivel just as the root did. In Calabrian magic, the plant was placed over the abdomen to draw out 'bad blood' caused by malaria.

> Hallowed be Thou Vervain, as Thou growest on
> the ground
> For in the mount of Calvary, there Thou was
> first found.
> Thou healedst our saviour, Jesus Christ,
> And staunchedst his bleeding wound,
> In the the name of the Father, the Son, and the
> Holy Ghost,
> I take Thee from the ground.
>
> —*Traditional English Prayer Invoking Vervain*

It is aligned with the esoteric properties of the planet Venus, and the goddess for which it is named; in some systems of correspondence, it also allies with the emanations of Mercury and Jupiter. As expressed through the *vehicula* of ritual and charm, its manifold occult powers include:

Protection
Consecration
Purification
Cœrsion
Reconciliation
Protection from Noxious Spirits
Triumph
Oblation
Love
Potentiation
Harmony

In early modern traditions of English folk magic, Vervain was gathered after roaming the fields at Midsummer Eve. According to other magical mandates, it was to be collected when neither the Sun nor the Moon were seen in the sky; some traditions maintained that the herb should be gathered with the left hand at the rising of the Dog Star after giving an offering of honey, or honeycomb.

Vervain was a frequent addition to love philters and liqueurs in the magical traditions of Europe. In the medieval era the herb was an aphrodisiac charm carried on the person. A number of ancient charms utilize the juices of Vervain smeared upon the entire body, to effect everything from divination to healing a disease. In one such rite, the sorcerer was said to gain the affection of anyone, even an enemy, if the entire body was covered with the juice. Another procedure to enchant the fingertips, required soaking the hands in Vervain juice and rubbing it well into the skin; the person subsequently touched would be bewitched, and turn their affections toward the magician. Similarly, English love spells in currency in the early 1600s prescribe use of the juices of the fresh herb, smeared upon the lips before kissing one's beloved, thereby to seal lasting love. Mexican *Brujeria* traditions regard Vervain as a plant of desire and use it in love-spells, and charms of attraction.

According to Gamache, a certain folk potion known as Juno's Tears was made from Vervain steeped in water. The resulting extraction was used for house-cleansing, and posesses great aptitude for expelling repulsive spirits. In Vodou, Vervain is the principle magical herb in the highly esteemed Van Van Oil.

In ancient Persia, Vervain branches were carried in rituals of Sun-worship. Vervain has been used in a propitative capacity in rites of the Great God Jupiter. When the ancient Romans declared war, bunches of the herb were sent to the enemy via envoy.

> If one goes to battle, let him seek the Vervain, and keep it in his clothes and he will escape from his enemies.
>
> —*The Physicians of Myddfai*

Vervain has renown as a plant of protection. Sprigs or bundles of Vervain were sometimes hung in doorways to prevent the entrance of evil spirits or neutralize the effects of *maleficia* before it entered the home. In the indigenous plant-traditions of North America, *Verbena hastata* was an esteemed witchcraft medicine of the Iroquois; a cold infusion of pounded leaves was used as a charm to make an obnoxious person depart. In Greece, it served as a protective amulet worn on the belt, effective against evil spirits when worn on St. John's Day especially. The herb also has a reputation as an effective charm to ward off accidents.

As well as serving as an offering to the gods, Vervain possesses a reputation for attracting spirits in general. A spirit-summoning divination in the *Munich Handbook* requires entering a circle of stones in a graveyard, sprinkled round with Vervain, then approaching the East to conjure the shade in question. An old tale from the Scottish Borders related a young woman's affair with the Devil, whose presence was enhanced by the presence of St. Johnswort and Vervain.

The Spirit-Retinue of Vervain

Offering, Tribute, Multiplication, Accumulation, Savoir-Faire, Adoration, Ravishment, Consummation, Mesmeric Charm, Secret Troth, Edulcorated Pact, Stellar Efflux, and Impeccable Armor.

VETCH

Vicia spp.
Fabaceæ (Pea Family)

VICIA is a large genus in the Pea family containing about 250 accepted species, collectively known as the Vetches, with more yet to be assessed. They are known for their ease of spreading and overtaking other plants. Tendrils, pinnate leaflets Flowers are small, and can be purple, pink, red or white. Vetches played a role in ancient human agriculture as a grain crop, although its palatability was less desirable than other pulses and grains. The great modern inheritance from former times of Vetch agriculture is the Faba Bean (*Vicia faba*), still important as a food crop and nitrogen fixing plant for green manures.

Locally, in the San Francisco Bay Area, we often see the American Vetch (*Vicia americana*) blanketing the hillsides with purple in spring, just as the yellow-orange California Poppies (*Eschscholzia californica*) have had their maximum bloom. They are often succeeded by pink clovers (*Trifolium*), and at some times, all three colors are on display.

Vetch is governed by Jupiter and Mars. Its occult properties are Fertility, Protection, Exorcism, Potentiation, Fortification and Warfare. When used for the latter purpose, it is the plant's characteristic of aggressive territorial acquisition that is entreated, as well as its ability to conquer and displace other plants in its path.

Various species of Vetch contain the cyanogenic disaccharide vicianin ($C_{19}H_{25}NO_{10}$), and extractives of the plant were used as an anti-cancer medicine in Victorian times. From the ancient Greek Magical Papyri, seeds of the bitter vetch (*Vicia ervilia*) were combined with Henbane, Barley, and other ingredients for use as a contraceptive.

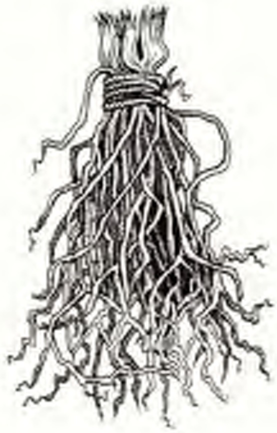
In North America, the Carolina Wood Vetch (*Vicia caroliniana*) was used by the Cherokee as a medicine for treating rheumatism, muscle pain, and cramps, as well as for provoking vomit when needful. As a plant of magical power, this same Vetch was used for expelling evil spirits, and the influences of malevolent dreams.

In Aranmore, Ireland, in some areas the Milk Vetch was regarded with dread, harboring a malevolent power which could be unleashed when uprooted. In a remarkable application of the Evil Eye, this energy could be focused by the harvester onto a victim: as the plant was pulled, the intended victim was stared at in order to direct this fatal power.

VETIVER

Chrysopogon zizanoides
Poaceæ (Grass Family)

A TALL, fragrant, perennial grass native to South India, growing to 2 meters in height, and now widespread in tropical regions where it can become invasive. Its leaves are narrow and linear, and the inflorescence consists of whorled racemes. Evolved for environmental cataclysm, Vetiver possesses the admirable ability to tolerate extreme drought, but also severe flooding; it also succeeds as slope conservation and preventing soil erosion. It spreads by rhizotomous stolons, which in turn produce a mass of fragrant, fibrous roots. These are dug and sold in bundles or extracted into essential oil or resinoid. Formerly genus *Vetiveria*, it has recently been reassigned as *Chrysopogon*. It is also known by the common names Vetivert or Khus Grass.



In Ayurvedic medicine it is used as a nervine, sedative and anti-inflammatory. It also has a reputation as an aphrodisiac, and for this purpose is added to certain foods. Vetiver's scent is smoky, woody, earthy, musky and balsamic, and combines with a wide variety of aromatics. In perfumes, it also performs the function of a fixative. In India and Indonesia, the roots are burned as incense, and also woven into fragrant mats and baskets.

It is aligned with the esoteric planetary virtues of Venus, and its occult powers are Allure, Coercion, Beneficence, Healing, Success in Gambling, and Necromancy. In Hoodoo magical practice, it is an essential ingredient in the assertive Van Van Oil, combined with essential oils of several other fragrant grasses from the genus *Cymbopogon* such as Palmarosa (C. *martinii*).

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF VETIVER

Ravishment, Charisma, Elan, Manifestation, Predomination, Intrepidity, Counteraction, Consolidation, Tenacity, Fealty, Tactical Gains, Worthy Succession, and Just Consummation.

VIBURNUM

Viburnum lantana

Adoxaceæ (Moschatel Family)

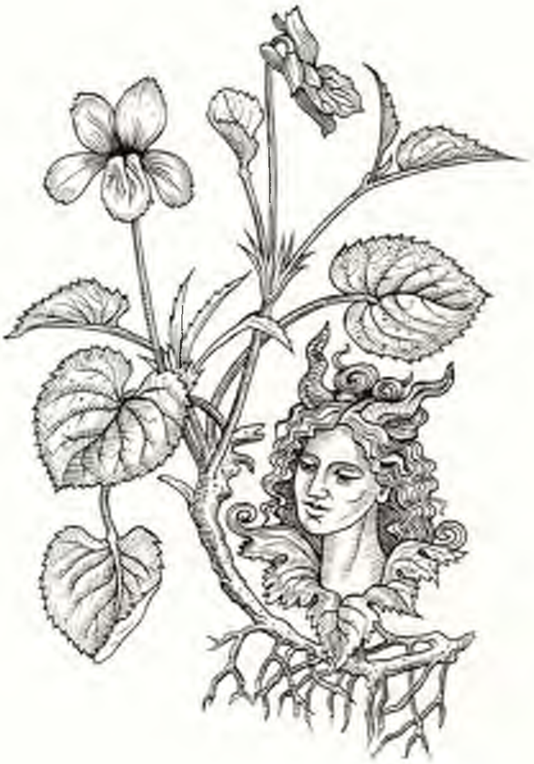
VIBURNUM constitutes an array of 140 accepted species of evergeen or deciduous shrubs, endemic to and generally populating the woodland understories of the temperate Northern Hemisphere. The tallest species in this clan can reach a height of 4 meters, but many are smaller; they produce white flowers in early summer, which give way to a spherical or oval drupe. Viburnum wood is hard and dense, and the branches form straight stems valued in folk-sorcery for the making of wands, staves and small magical objects. *Viburnum lantana*, the Wayfaring Tree of Europe, is one of the best-known shrubs of this genus, also known as Hoarwithy, as is the Guelder Rose or Cramp Bark (V. *opulus*). There are a multitude of species native to North America, many of which also possess medicinal, edible, and magical properties.

The shrubs possess varied medicinal characteristics, generally of a cleansing and fortifying nature. Tea from the inner bark of Nannyberry (V. *lentago*) was used to quiet uterine spasms after childbirth, and was valued by the Micmac tribe as an abortifacient. Some Viburnums were used as a contraceptive by the Iroquois. Berries of some species, such as V. *edule*, are edible, and used by Native Americans as a winter food, or for jellies, sauces and dried cakes; though if eaten in excess can be nausea-inducing. The fruit of many Viburnums is emetic, as with V. *opulus*. The inner bark is, generally, anti-inflammatory, used for a number of conditions, including as a throat gargle, or to treat uro-genital conditions.

Its chief spiritual properites are Protection, Exorcism, Healing and Fertility. Reflecting its protective capabilities, it is appropriately found as a hedge in the landscape, and in the garden it serves as a sustainable source of food for wildlife. Much of the lore reflecting the powers of the Virburnum comes from the stock of Native American plant medicine. Hobblebush or Witch-hobble (V. *lantanoides*), whose fruits are also edible, was used by the Iroquois as a Love Medicine; decoction of the peeled root was drunk for female fertility. In combination with Witch-Grass (*Agropyron repens*), it was used for keeping evil spirits away.

Infusion of the bark of V. *acerifolium* was used as a Witchcraft Medicine, applied to the skin as a poultice against pains caused by evil magic. Bark of some species such as V. *dentatum* was used by the Ojiwba as a smoking mixture, or kinnikinnick.

Viburnum is important in Slavic paganism as a symbol of life, love and lineage; in Lithuania, it was associated with maidens and maidenhood. The wood of the Wayfaring Tree, native to Britain and Western Europe, was used as a magical weapon by *Benandante* sorcerers of the Italian Friuli, in the form a rod carried behind crosses in Rogation processions, which were later banned because of their alleged diabolical influence. In Britain, the wood protected against witchcraft; pins for livestock yokes were made from it, and the living shrub was planted near the home to prevent *maleficia* and the Evil Eye.



VIOLET

Viola spp., *Viola odorata*
Violaceæ (Violet Family)

A RESERVED—yet most hardy—shade-dwelling plant growing to 15 cm. high, Violet is known by its heart-shaped leaves, slowly-creeping rhizome, and sweet-scented blossoms appearing from spring to winter. Violet flowers exhibit a range of color from blue to pink to white. The genus *Viola* contains 265 accepted species, with many more currently under assessment.

Its virtues are concentrated in the flowers and leaves. A notoriously subtle and elusive fragrance, it demands the utmost in care when working with, as well as time-intensive labor for reification of perfumes which smell true to the flower. Most 'Essential Oil of Violet' on the market is synthetic and derived from the compound ionone ($C_{13}H_{20}O$), created by combining citral with acetone. True Essence of Violet in the form of a concrete or absolute is very costly to make, owing to the vast amounts of plant material needed, yet it is sometimes available to commercial perfumers. The flowers are still used to make Syrup of Violet, as well as being made into candied petals.

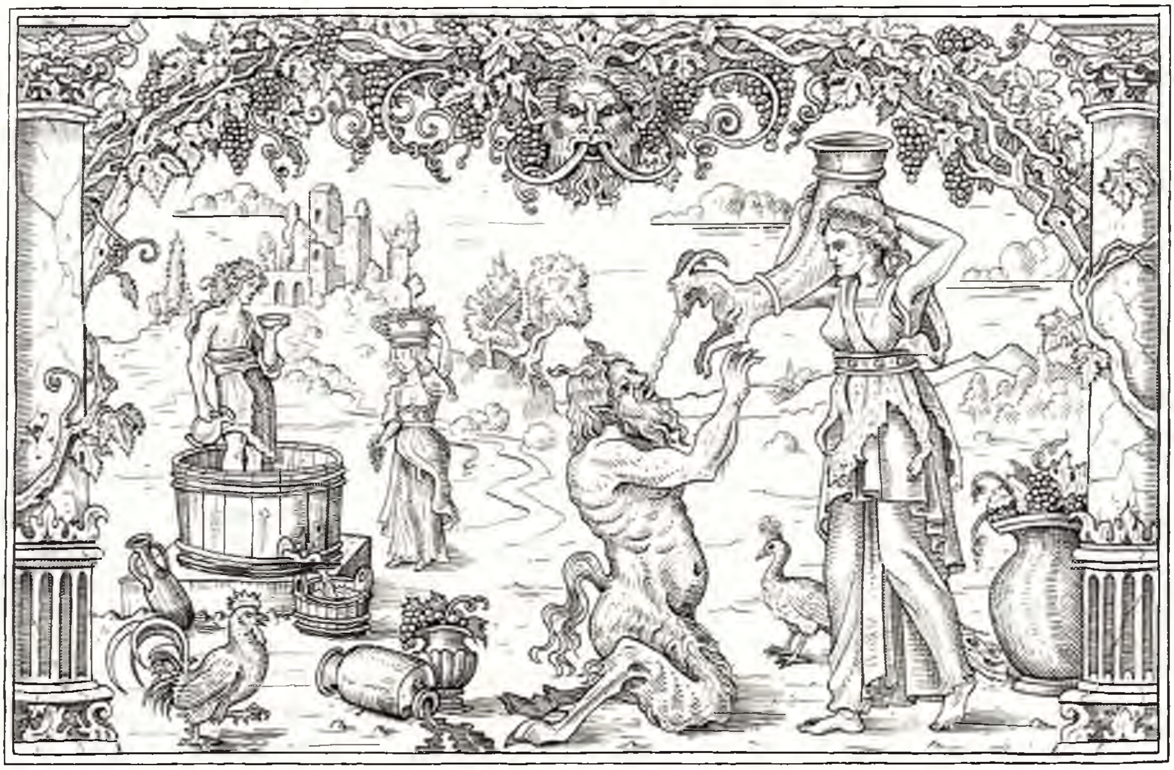
Violet is anti-inflammatory, analgesic, laxative, stimulant, and anti-rheumatic. In classical allopathic therapeutics, it is considered to strengthen the heart, and is a folk remedy for cancer, ulcers, and varicose veins. The root has also been used as an emetic. The blossoms and herb should be collected when the plant begins to flower.

Owing to its enigmatic perfume, its action upon human passions, and its cordate leaf, it is aligned with Venus, and is well suited to magical action in that sphere. Its powers are love, allure, coercion, protection from maleficia, clarivoyance, fidelity, and binding the the dead. It is also aligned with the dead, and in some traditions eschewed as an unlucky or evil omen. During the ancient rites of Attis, the trunk of the sacrificial Pine tree was bedecked with Violets; and when Orpheus was shredded by the resentful Thracian women, the first Violet sprung from where his lyre came to rest on the ground.

In antiquity, Violet oil was used magically as protection from poisoning. Inhaled or comprising an internal medicament, it was a frequent ingredient in Arabian counter-poisons and antidotes.

Monks cultivated Violets in cloister-gardens for their magical properties of driving away uninvited spirits. In harmony with this power against evil, several North American species of *Viola* were esteemed by the Iroquois as a Witchcraft Medicine.

The Romans made wine from *Viola odorata*; to the ancient Greeks, it was a philter, an arouser of sexual potency, and a flower evocative of fertility.



DEVOTEES OF THE IMMORTAL VINEYARD

Among practitioners of American Hoodoo, the Violet has associations with lucky power: a mojo to bring luck in gambling prescribes powdered violet incense, High John the Conqueror Root, Adam and Eve Root, and black lodestone, all sewn into a pouch of red flannel. A formula for an incense of illumination and revealing appears in the 13th century grimoire *Liber Juratus*, consisting of a mixture of violet roots, flax seed, parsley roots, and an herb called 'fleaseed', likely a species of Psyllium (*Plantago*).

The Spirit-Retinue of Violet

Subtlety, Subterfuge, Impassivity, Ineffability,
Seduction, Obscurity, Insidious Arousal,
Fleeting Revelation, Hidden Treasure,
Silent Advocacy, Haunted Peri-
pheries, Umbral Elegy, and
Lying in Repose.

VINE

Vitis vinifera, Vitis spp.
Vitaceæ (Vine Family)

GRAPE is a deciduous liana, mainly endemic to the northern hemisphere. Proceeding from a thick root stock, its branches produce palmately-lobed leaves and creeping tendrils. The fruit is a succulent berry which, under domestication, produces sweet juice suitable for fermentation into Wine. About 65 species comprise the genus *Vitis*; many are wild species with unknown potentials for fermentation. Under human stewardship, the common grapevine (*V. vinifera*) has given rise to more than 7,500 unique cultivars or varietals as they are known, some with exceedingly ancient bloodlines. The earliest evidence of wine discovered thus far hails from the Caucasus and Anatolia, circa 4000 BCE. By 3500 BC viticulture was well-established in Mesopotamia.

In planetary correspondence, the Vine is aligned with the Sun and Jupiter; its occult powers are Consecration, Allure, Love, Marriage, and Oblation. It also was used in funerary rites; Wine was often poured there as a libation for the dead, as well as to cthonic deities.

Originally it was goddesses who presided over the Vine; the Sumerian goddess Ama-Gestin was the patroness of the Vine, and Isis conceived Horus by eating a grape. Wine and Beer were sacred to the Egyptian Hathor. This was to change when Osiris became the patron deity; as Lord of the Dead and the realms of spirit, he was appeased with libations of wine. Wine was also used as nourishment for the deceased, while journeying in the realms of the dead. In Greece, the wood was employed in rites of offering to Hermes.

> And I said, 'I pray you, show me which is the tree which caused Adam to ſtray'. And the angel said, 'It is the vine which the angel Samael planted by which the lord God became angered, and he cursed him and his plantling. For this reason he did not permit Adam to touch it. And because of this, the Devil became envious, and tricked him by means of his vine.'
>
> —III Baruch 4:8

Unfermented wine was employed in Mandæan marriage ceremonies in southern Iraq. The prieſt filled a drinking bowl with water collected from a running source. To this was added fresh grapes or raisins for female fertility, and dates for male fertility. These fruits were then pressed with the fingers until the water was well-colored.

> Among the early Hebrew sects, the fruit of the vine became the moſt popular source of alcohol, and the practice spread to the Arabs and Coptic Chriſtians, the latter regarding fermentation as an act of the devil.
>
> WILLIAM EMBODEN
> *Narcotic Plants*, 1972

The ancient Greek *symposion* were renowned for their ſtrong drink, in particular, their enchanted wines. Adjuncts to Greek wines included Mandrake, Opium Poppy, Hellebore, Belladonna, Myrrh, Henbane, Saffron, Oleander, Balm of Gilead, and Frankincense. The Krater was a large vessel for diluting these ſtrong wines with water.

The splendidly-endowed fertility god Priapos was one patron deity of grapevines, and in ancient times Ithyphallic fetishes of the god were carved from Fig wood and ſtationed in the vineyard. A more recent vineyard protection charm bound a bone and red ribbon to a grapevine to protect the grapes from evil spirits and malefic magic.

In ancient Greece, the Vine-shoot was regarded as possessing ſtrong properties of purification. The ashes of grape wood, painſtakingly extracted by the alchemiſts, were known as *Cinis Farmentitius*, and were prized for their unique medicinal properties, such as the removal of warts. Nicholas Remy, a judge during the European witch-craze and privy counselor to the Duke of Lorraine, wrote that grape vines were the moſt efficacious type of whip to use on witches to compel them to undo their sorcery.

A spell appearing in an eighth-century Coptic manuscript utilizes grape seeds, maſtic, and honey, drunk with water in a magical cup, for the purpose of obtaining an excellent singing voice.

In Slavic folk magic, if a maiden wishes to be visited by a future lover in her dreams, a piece of grapevine was placed under her pillow to effect the charm. In wedding lore of Morocco, the bride is offered raisins —or showered with them—to convey the blessing of sweetness.

The Spirit-Retinue of Vine

Civilization, Refinement, Gaiety, Romance, Conversation, Eloquence, Delectation, Spontaneity, Ruddiness, Hyperthymia, Rustic Nobility, Bibulous Poſtulation, and Bacchic Oracles.

VIPER'S BUGLOSS

Echium vulgare

Boraginaceæ (Borage Family)

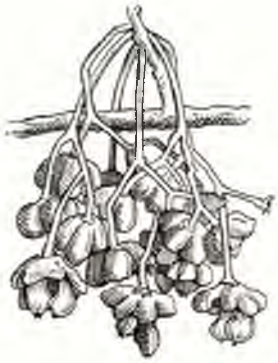
ECHIUM VULGARE is a biennial herb native to Eurasia, growing to 80 cm in height, with oblanceolate leaves and bright blue flowers arranged on a vertical spike, favoring dry or otherwise poor soils. It is commonly known as Blue Devil. Other species of *Echium* may have white, red, or pink flowers, and are known for their imposing conical inflorescences, which have caused some to call them 'vegetable monſtrosities.'

Among horticultural writers the plant has received a considerable amount of ire for its weediness and propensity to run over fallow ground and waſte places. The related plant known as Paterson's Curse (*Echium plantagineum*), which has infeſted native grasslands in Auſtralia, is a particularly egregious example. However, many Echiums are prized ornamental specimens, their ſtrange and otherworldly blossoms fixating those passing through the garden. A particularly grandiose cultivar seen in California gardens is *Echium wildpretii* 'Tower of Jewels', a native of the Canary Islands whose imposing conical infloresence can reach a height of 3 meters. Rich in nectar, its flowers are equally loved by bees.

> As the fair echium bringeth forth an evil-favoured seed, and that evil-favoured seed again bringeth forth a fair bugloss: so sometimes a godly father begetteth an evil child, and a wicked child again sometimes begetteth a godly son.
>
> ROBERT CAWDRY
>
> *A Treasury*, or Storehouse of Similes, 1609

Among the planets, its magical essence is aligned with Mercury, and its chief occult virtues are protection from poisons, mostly of the etheric and spiritual variety. Viper's Bugloss held an ancient reputation for healing and preventing snakebite; in part, this was based on the strange, undulating shape of its inflorescence, which some saw as resembling a snake. In antiquity, the plant was regarded to be a spirit of falsehood, because the root of one species was employed to "falsify the complexions of fayre laydes". Roots of the plant were at one time used in Poland as a cosmetic for making lipstick.

The herb has ancient renown as a theriac, and its seeds, leaves and root, steeped in wine, were recommended draughts against snakebite and the venom of poisonous animals. In the times of pestilence, it had repute as a minor plague medicine; it was brewed into a medicating summer ale, along with Borage and Sorrel; distilled waters of Viper's Bugloss were also recommended as a cordial against 'putrid vapours'. It was also a popular ingredient in formulae against melancholy and madness. Porta, like Albertus Magnus before him, recommended consumption of Bugloss to promote pleasant dreams.



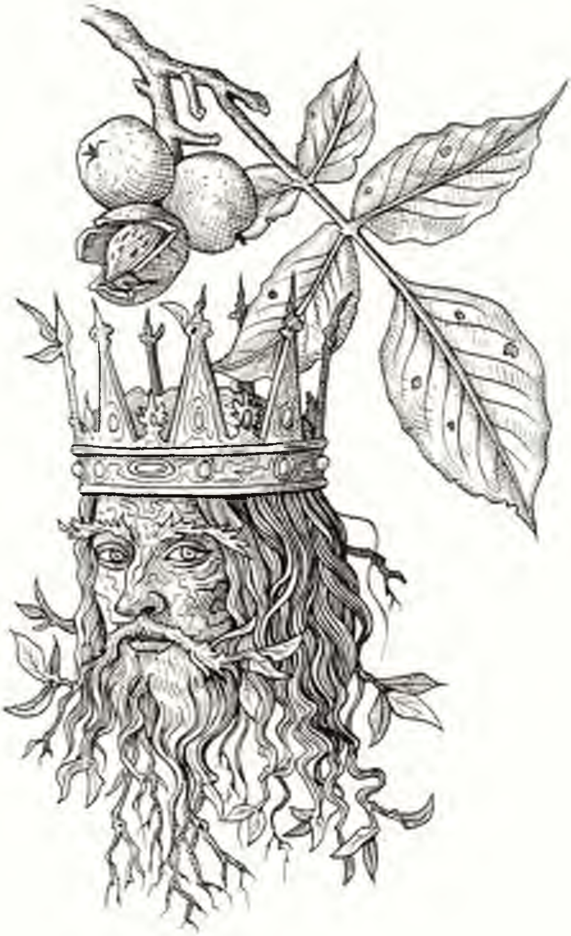
WAHOO

Euonymus atropurpureus; Euonymus spp.
Celastraceæ (Bittersweet Family)

WAHOO is a deciduous shrub or tree to 8 meters meters high, with maroon branches, purplish cruciform flowers, elliptical leaves, and a small, red fruit capsule. It thrives in the woods of the northern and central sections of the United States. The bark of Wahoo, and several other *Euonymus* species is well-documented as a medicine among Native Americans, used principally as a cathartic and an abortifacient. Branches of Wahoo are sometimes used as dowsing rods in the Ozarks.

There are 220 species in the genus *Euonymus*, mostly native to tropical southeast Asia. Most prefer humus-rich woods on rocky slopes or shoreline thickets in warm regions from lowlands to mountains. A European variety, E. *europaeus*, is traditionally known by the names of Prick Wood and Spindle Tree; its wood is used in Eastern Europe by cobblers to make pegs. Various *Euonymous* shrub cultivars have been bred for the garden and landscape. When using the twigs and bark, freshly gathered and dried material is far prefereable to the Wahoo of commerce, as the quality of the packaged material varies greatly.

As used in magic and ritual, its powers are strongly purgative, aligned with its medicinal properties, used for lifting curses and casting out evil spirits. The Iroquois used a compound infusion of E. *obovata*, with other plants, to treat persons who had been bewitched. Wahoo bark may be made into a strong decoction and used as a floor wash for cleansing a dwelling of haunting spirits, or for reversing a curse laid thereon. One Vodun spell for removing a curse employs a strong decoction of Wahoo, sponged over the body. Ozarkers employ the bark in a tea as a funerary aid; cloths are soaked in the tea, then laid over the face of the deceased, so as to keep the complexion appearing fresh for the funeral.



WALNUT

Juglans regia

Juglandaceæ (Walnut Family)

A REGAL, deciduous tree to 33 meters, with dark green odd-pinnate leaves and silvery, deeply-furrowed bark. Catkins appear in late spring or early summer, while the green fruits, harboring hard-shelled nuts within, appear in autumn. The Walnut thrives from Europe, through the Himalayas, to China. The genus *Juglans*, comprising the True Walnuts, comprises about 20 species of trees, including *J. californica*, the California Black Walnut. All Walnut species produce a dense, dark hardwood prized for working and turning. It possesses a variety of common names including Jupiter's Nuts, Nux Regia, Jauz, and Egoz.

Walnut exudes a natural nobility in its surroundings, made all the more prominent by its versatility in cuisine, medicine, and magic. All these aspects reflect the power of Dominion, hence the time-honored correspondences with royalty and kingship; the superiority of its wood for carving and shaping also suggests this. The power of the tree as a vermifuge also testifies to this quality of right rulership, keeping the Human Temple free of invaders.

The ancient Greeks used Walnut medicinally to treat rabies and parasitic worms. An insecticide may be extracted from the fresh leaves, and the husk of the fruit is an esteemed fungicide. As a tea, gargle or wash, an infusion of Walnut leaves may be used for irritations and inflammations of the gums and throat.

The tree nobly expresses the esoteric principles of the planet Jupiter; this quality permeates the whole of the tree, but is especially concentrated in the nut, for its nourishing and oleaginous properties. Its magical powers are longevity, lust, cursing, severing alliances, protection from lightningp, and Protection from Fever. Abundant in the Near East, the Walnut is an ancient fertility symbol. Both the Greeks and Romans of antiquity regarded the tree and its nuts as symbols of fecundity, and the nuts were tossed at weddings to ensure these powers.

In contrast, medieval Europeans reviled the Walnut as the Devil's tree, and considered its nuts and branches to be infested with diabolic power. In Eastern Europe and Russia, Walnut trees are scourged to exorcise the baneful spirits thought to haunt them, so as to improve their nut-bearing abilities. Traditions of Southern Europe held the trees to be places of nocturnal assembly for demons. A Walnut placed beneath a chair was thought to have the power to permanently anchor any witch who sat therein.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF WALNUT

Concupiscence, Arability, Obduration, Patronage, Fornication, Salubriousness, Blackening, Agrestic Ceremony, Stained Flesh, Virile Swellings, Fecund Wombs, Fiendish Association, and Infernal Genius.

A medieval German charm against contagion utilized quicksilver, sealed with wax in the hollow of a walnut, and carried on the person. Elsewhere in Germany, shims of living walnut wood were cut before sunrise and prayed over for the removal of fever, then placed back into the tree so that the wood would grow, removing the illness as it did.

The tree is beloved in England, but there too its demonic reputation endured in some quarters. In Sussex, it was held to give forth a poisoned miasma, of such potency that it was well known to avoid sleeping beneath its branches.

> He that would eat the fruit must climb the tree.
> He that eat the kernel must crack the nut.
> He that sleepeth under a Walnut doth get fitts in the head.
>
> —*Sussex Folk Saying*, 19th c.

In North America, the native Walnuts had a reputation as an aid to weather enchantment. The Iroquois employed the bark as a Witchcraft Medicine, in the form of an infusion, to bring rain.

In Bulgarian folk custom, *Juglans regia* is used on St. George's Day for protection of animals and the home. Lithuanian Deluge myths tell that in ancient times the creator god was eating Walnuts when the earth began to flood, and the shells he discarded became the original arks in which the humans took refuge. In Hungarian lore, witches went forth to to their spirit-gatherings by sailing in Walnut shells down the Rivers Tisza and Danube.

The leaves and fruit-husks have been used as a traditional dye, with colors ranging from yellow to tan, to black. Moroccan women used the bark for a traditional dye for staining the lips black. The tree has also provided color as the basis of traditional plant inks, such as the Ink of Ezra Ha Sofer'alava hashalom ('Ezra the Scribe, peace be upon him'):

> Take myrtle leaves, one part, and olive leaves, one part, it should be green, and gallnuts half a part, and one part of pomegranate peel, and of the leaves of the skin of green walnut, one part. Cook all of it water most thoroughly and take it off the fire, and leave a day and a night, and thereafter it will become purified, and put on it half a part of Cyprian walnuts. And there has never been one like it.

The wood is of especial virtue in carving, being hard, dense, and of open but tight grain, suitable for fetish and mask alike. Its branches are also supreme conveyors of telluric force and have been used for divinatory rods and staves. The *Grand Grimoire* specifies a virgin branch of Walnut, taken with three strokes of the left hand, for the enspirited construction of a divining rod.

The *Titulus Crucis*, a Christian Relic alleging to be the wooden placard hung above Christ as his crucifixion, is carved of Walnut, bearing the inscription *Iesus Nazarenvs Rex Iudeaorum*. Though the object has been radiocarbon dated to the tenth century at the earliest, it is still venerated as a relic of the True Cross in the Chruch of Santa Croce in Gerusalemme in Rome, and its pitted surface bears ample testimony to the perpetuity of Walnut after the passage of a thousand years.

The powder of the wood, obtained as a byproduct of woodworking, serves as an exceptional base for incense, yielding a buttery, slightly spicy aroma. The ground bark of the related Butternut (*Juglans cinerea*) makes a fragrant addition to incense and when burned gives rise to a sweet, pacifying aroma. To a lesser extent the hard shell of the ripe nut may also be so used.

In Calabria, the more deadly forms of malaria were considered a spiritual or supernatural affliction, and the amulet known as the *nuci trischera o a tri guarri* (a three-valve Walnut shell) was used. A spider was imprisoned between two walnut shells, or, alternately, the skeleton and fangs of snake. The malignant powers of the disease would then affect the walnut, the spider or the snake remains, having been transferred from the patient.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Fortification, Increase, Diabolism.
Element: Earth.
Planet: Jupiter and the Sun.
Magical Virtue: Fortification.
Deific Forms: Jupiter, Zeus, Veles, Satan.
Divine Appellation: God's Nuts.
Medicine: Antihelmintic.
Poison: Allelopathy.
Eponymous Compounds: Juglone $C_{10}H_6O_3$.
Domain: Grove.
Corporeal Power: Libido.
Magical Gesture: Sabbat-Dance.
Atavistic Power: Infernal Convocation.
Alchemical Concept: Regulus.
Emblem: A horned king, mantled in brown, arising from a pit, holding a leaved scepter and a golden cup, attended by a throng of dancers.

WATER LILY

Nymphaea spp.
Nymphaceæ (Water Lily Family)

A DENIZEN of lakes and ponds, Water Lilies have large floating peltate or cordate leaves floating on the surface of the water, with white, pink, yellow or blue flowers. The plants reproduce vegetatively, as well as sexually, producing seeds. Genus *Nymphaea*, having about 40 accepted species, is distributed worldwide. More generally, the entire family Nymphaceae may serve to encompass the spiritual ingenium of the Water Lily, including such genera as *Nuphar* and *Victoria*. Flowers of some *Nymphaea* species contain psychoactive principles and were important in ancient Egyptian and Mayan religion.

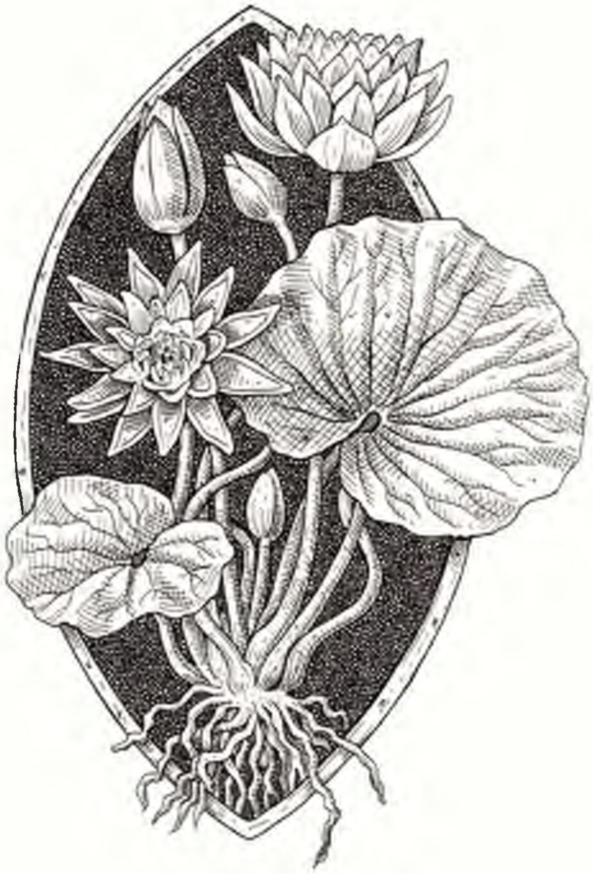
In planetary attribute, Water Lily corresponds with the the Moon, extending especially to its morphology and habitat. Its occult powers are Allure, Fertility, Immortality, Meditation, Divination & Healing. In Mayan culture, *Nymphaea ampla* was known as *nitke'ha* or 'Vulva of the Water.'

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF WATER LILY

Metempsychosis, Parturition, Arrival, Anamnesis, Transcendence, Immersion, Inundation, Abstraction, Déjà rêve, Mirage, Serous Majesty, Pellucid Beauty, and Buoyant Rapture.

The Blue Water Lily (*Nymphaea nouchali* var. *caerulea*) was endemic to Egypt, in particular the Nile Delta, and representations of it occur as early as the 4th Dynasty, where it is connected to Osiris. As the ethnobotanist William Emboden has observed, the appearance of the Lily in ancient tomb frescoes, together with the fruit of Mandrake (*Mandragora* spp.) and capsules of Opium Poppy (*Papaver somniferum*) places the flower in a very select ritual context, containing two other known psychoactive plants. The plant was also enmeshed with the priesthood, for whose mortuary practices it was reserved as a funeral flower.

The Iroquois employed the root of the Yellow Pond Lily (*Nuphar luteum*), cold-infused in water, as medicine against bewitchment, to chase noxious spirits, and to deprive malefic sorcerers of their eyesight. The entire plant was also hung to keep witches away.



The 13th century European book of angelic magic *The Book of the Angel Raziel*, contains a love-charm in which an amulet is inscribed on a shell with the juices of Saffron and Water Lily, using a bronze stylus.

The Guaraní peoples regard the Santa Cruz Water Lily (*Victoria cruziana*) as the beautiful Irupé, a potentially dangerous enchantress. In ancient times, Irupé was a maiden who fell in unrequited love with the moon, and drowned in the waters, mistaking her reflection for him. In death she was transformed into the Lily, and the scent of the flower is considered particularly strong magic.

WHEAT

Triticum æstivum
Poaceæ (Grass Family)

AN ANNUAL grass originating in Western Asia, common bread Wheat is an essential modern grain intimately connected with the genesis of agriculture, as well as the transition from states of wildness to domestication. Other forms of Wheat are found within genus *Triticum*, which contains about thirty distinct species. The plant is genetically complex, being allopolyploid, i.e., formed by assimilation and fusion of genetic material originating outside its own species. It possesses two sets of chromosomes from Einkorn (*Triticum avartu*) and two from a species of the wild grass *Aegilops*. Domestication of Wheat is dated to various times before the Common Era, depending on which of its genetic strands are examined. The oldest cereal remains generally conforming to the hexaploid Wheat of the modern era were found in the Çatalhöyük complex in Anatolia, dating to about 6400 BCE. If we consider domestication of the ancestral Einkorn, the timeline is pushed back at least a thousand years earlier. Remains of high-gluten Wheat varieties, essential for yeasted breads, have been located in archaeological sites dating to 1350 BCE.

Its planetary resonance it is linked with both Venus, Jupiter. Its occult properties are Fertility, Healing, Commerce, Wealth and Funerary power. Where intersection with classical deities is concerned, it is aligned with such goddesses as Demeter and Ceres, and those ancient grain-giving divinities that preceded them. In addition to its aspects of sexuality and fertility, it is connected with Immortality, and the mystery of Resurrection.

The Spirit-Retinue of Wheat

Providence, Dependency, Stewardship, Ascendancy, Investment, Birthright, Fellowship, Transmutation, Corporeality, Theophagy, Miraculous Bequest, Wondrous Rebirth, and Seminal Vigor.

In Pomerania, the first sheaves of Wheat from the harvest were laid upon a cross to prevent their theft by witches' familiars. Bunched Wheat stalks, known as *trigo*, are valued for their protective power in Spanish folk magic, and are used against the Evil Eye.

It is intimately connective with the human incarnative cycle, both embodying and empowering the force of Life. Wheat-corns were at one time showered over newly-married couples to ensure a happy and fertile union; in Syrian traditions, boiled wheat is served as a funeral meal, augmented with spices, walnuts, almonds, hazelnuts, walnuts, or pine-kernels. When eaten by the mourners, they proclaim *"May God bless him for whom we eat this now."*

> Among the Ossetians, we may remember, the *burkudzäutä* say that they fight on the meadows of the beyond to wrest the shoots of wheat from the souls of the dead.
>
> CARLO GINZBURG
> *Ecstasies*, 1989

A dream of harvesting ripe Wheat kernels was aid to portend success in business undertakings. If the kernels are green, success will be sure, but slow in coming. If green Rye-corns suddenly ripen, an unexpected inheritance is foretold. If the corn is blighted or rots on the stalk, this foretells significant loss in legal or business matters. If weevils, rats, or other vermin scamper among the ripe corns, your success will be followed by theft or heavy taxation of some kind. A burning sheaf is an adverse omen, signifying suffering, mortality and death.

In the *Spiritual Diaries* of Dr. John Dee, written from 1583–1608, the angel Gabriel imparted a recipe for healing. It called for Pure Wheat, Pheasant Cock, Masculine Amber, and unwashed turpentine. These were then to be commingled and pounded together, then put into a gallon of red wine, this being distilled with a fire of the second heat, then distilled again, discarding the feces.

Alectryomancy is divination by grains of Wheat. Cicero, in *De divinatione*, relays: "When Midas, King of Phrygia, was an infant, some ants crammed some grains of Wheat into his mouth while he was sleeping." From this, it was predicted he would later amass large amounts of gold. A classic method of alectryomancy involved drawing a circle on the ground, then dividing up equal portions of this circle for each letter of the alphabet. Each lettered section was sprinkled equally with grain, and a cock was released so that it might proceed browse. Thus was a message pecked out, with new grains swiftly added to replace those eaten.

CORERESPONDENCES
Powers: Fertility, Fortification, Immortality.
Virtue: Civilization.
Element: Earth.
Planets: Jupiter.
Deific Forms: Osiris, Demeter, Ceres.
Domains: Field, Floodplain.
Embodied State: Apotheosis.
Corporeal Locus: Gametes.
Therapeutic: Nutrition.
Affliction: Sedentism.
Emblem: A golden sheaf upon green ground, surmounted by a scythe, with a human skull at its base.

WILLOW

Salix spp.
Family: Salicaceæ (Willow Family)

WATER-LOVING Willows properly comprise the genus *Salix*, being approximately 375 accepted species of shrubs and medium to large trees. The leaves are most frequently lanceolate or oblong, and Willows are especially known for their flexible withies, the young branches with which artists create sculpture and basketry. The inflorescences are dioecious catkins, a signature morphological characteristic. Willows are frequently found growing in moist depressions, ditches, and swales, and often in thickets, serving as crucial wildlife habitat. Some exemplars such as Weeping Willow (*S. babylonica*) are important landscape trees and can grow to immense sizes as solitary specimens. The showy group known as Pussy Willows, or 'pussies', so named for their soft catkins resembling domestic felines, are chiefly of three species, being the Goat Willow (*S. caprea*), as well as *S. cinerea* and *S. discolor*. Common folk names generally applied to Willow are Osiers, Saille, and Sallows.

Medicinally, the bark is tonic and astringent. As it contains significant concentrations of tannin, it has been long valued in the tanning of hides. The bark of numerous species is valuable in the making of natural vegetal dyes, yielding a range of color from bright yellow through dark golden brown. The bark of various endemic species, such as *Salix humila*, was smoked as a pleasant tobacco substitute by Native Americans, or formed an ingredient in kinnikinnick.

The Doctrine of Signatures assigns the planetary influence and virtue of the Moon to Willow, and its occult properties are Fertility, Sterility, Protection Against Maleficia, Funerary, Longevity, Protection from Fascination. This folkloric axis of fertility and sterility especially links Willow with witches, whose magic was often linked to sexuality through the love charm, philter, and blight upon crops and cattle. The Greeks regarded the Willow as a tree of the underworld, frequently visited by chthonian nymphs. The tree was also, in some traditions, regarded as the habitation of the demoness Lilith. The wooden statues of Artemis Orthia, called the 'Willow-bound one', were woven with branches of the tree.

Many traditions ascribed the Willow a moribund reputation, haunting the living, foretelling death by the sign of its shadow, or even following walkers at night. This is reputation is particularly pronounced in Weeping Willow, long associated with grief and mourning. Central European traditions tell of Judas Iscariot hanging himself on the tree, while others blame the Willow for providing the scourges used to lacerate the flesh of Jesus prior to his crucifixion.

Among Native Americans, the Creeks held four Sacred Teas in reverence, one of which was known as *Miko Hoyanidja*, also known as Passer-By of the Chiefs, made from the pounded roots of a native Willow, possibly *Salix nigra*. The drink seems to have been regarded as the most potent of this quadrivium which also included the Holly-derived Black Drink.

Gypsy lore taught that Willow-sprigs growing in knots are natural love-charms. Willow catkins were considered aphrodisiac, while the twigs and buds were regarded as both anaphrodisiac and contraceptive. Some writers of antiquity such as Theophrastus and Pliny believed drinking decoctions or infusions of Willow would make women barren.

> In Austria I found an infinitude of magicians who only occupied themselves in killing and maiming men, in putting discord among married people, in causing divorces, in tying witch-knots in osier or willow branches to stop the flow of milk in the breasts of nursing women, and similar infamies.
>
> ABRAHAM THE JEW
> *The Book of the Sacred Magic of Abramelin the Mage*

Bundles of Willow affixed to a doorway were a widespread precaution against malefic magic. Pussy Willow was sometimes planted near the door to keep away witches, or to deter persons exuding a noxious misama.

* * *

In European occult traditions, Willow is considered to be one of the best water-divining woods, along with Hazel and Birch. It is also used for fashioning magical wands in ceremonial magic, the sacred branch or *withe* cut in the spring, with the rising sap, as the moon waxes. After drying, the wood is light, hard, and easily worked, though the grain on some species can be quite fibrous.

> There are a lot of diviners in Scythia; the divinatory method they practice involves a large number of willow rods. First they bring their rods wrapped up in large bundles, put them on the ground, and unroll the bundles; then they position the rods one by one and make their prophecies, while simultaneously wrapping the rods back up again, one by one, into a bundle.
>
> HERODOTUS
> *The Histories*

In the New Testament Apocryphon *Thomas's Gospel of the Infancy of Jesus Christ*, a rival magician used a branch of Willow to scatter the waters of a lake which Jesus had gathered together. Affronted, Christ leveled a withering curse upon the man.

Among some American Indian tribes, Willow is used for ceremonial wands and prayer sticks. In Hopi traditions, votive prayer sticks of the death god are made from the branches of Willow.

In England, staves of its wood were planted in the garden to protect crops. Fetishes made from the twigs, worn on the body, protected one from storms and lightning. In China, wreaths of Willow are worn as rain-charm in Shanxi. Withies of Basket Willow (*Salix veminalis*) were employed to tie Birch twigs onto the Ashen handle of the Witch's broom was called.

In Britain, boughs of Willow are sometimes used for beating the bounds on Rogation Sunday (the fifth Sunday after Easter). In the modern occult recension of Sabbatic Witchcraft, the magical weapon known as the Crooked Wand is made from the gnarled, convoluted woodflesh of the Crooked Willow (*S. tortuosa*), cut at noon with a single stroke of the working knife, carved with totemic sigils of the sorcerer.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF WILLOW

Mutability, Porosity, Immersion, Penetration, Osmosis, Capriciousness, Longing, Licentiousness, Feral Libido, Swaying Limbs, Fulsome Advances, Fiery Upwellings, and Feminine Wiles.

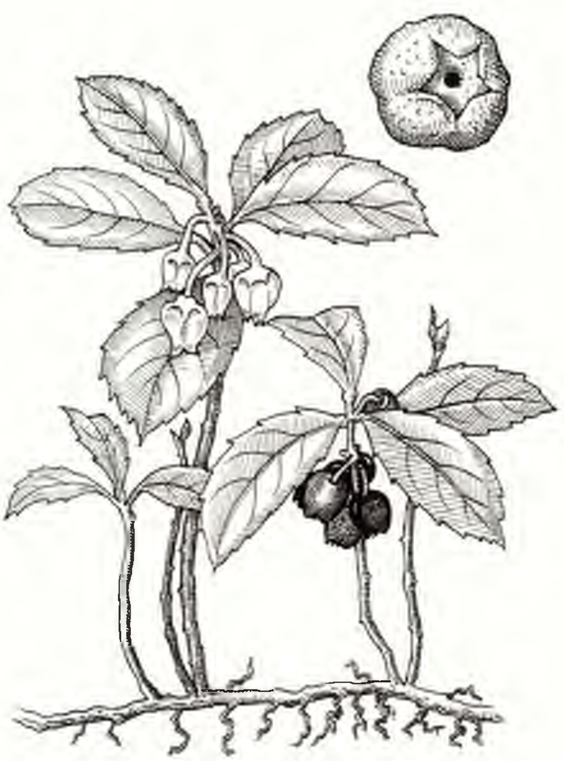
Willow-smoke has appeared in several operations of magical healing. According to Charles Godfrey Leland, the Gypsies of Siebenburgen employed decayed Willow wood as a magical smudge or fumigant for removing pain. Similarly, an old Bohemian medical grimoire, entitled *Perfect and Tested Secrets or Various Medical, Magical, Chemical, Sympathy and Anti-sympathy Treatments* offers the following formula employing the virtues of Willow against toothache:

> Go to a willow tree, peel off the bark and cut a small piece of wood from the trunk. With this pick the sore tooth until it bleeds, afterwards fit the bloody piece of wood back in place on the willow tree and cover it again with the bark, then the toothache will disappear, but you have to bandage the tree.

As a pleasant fume, the ground bark is a fine addition to incenses. The *Clavicle of Solomon*'s conjuration of the devil Lucifuge Rofocale instructs the operator to burn Willow-wood in a brazier throughout the rite.

CORRESPONDENCES

Magical Powers: Fertility-Sterility.
Planet: Moon.
Element: Water.
Deific Forms: Lilith, Artemis Lygodesma, Circe, Hekate.
Spirit-Patrons: Seirim.
Domain: Marsh.
Therapeutic: Connection/Attachment.
Affliction: Aloofness.
Emblem: A maiden standing amid a close-woven thicket, wearing a crown of catkins, bearing a leafing staff in her left hand, and pouring water from a goblet with her right.



WINTERGREEN

Gaultheria procumbens
Ericaceæ (Heath Family)

THE genus *Gaultheria* encompasses some 100 species, native mostly to the Andes, but also in Asia, Australia and North America. G. *procumbens*, known as American Wintergreen, is a pleasantly odorous, creeping shrub or groundcover, with ovate leaves rising from an adventitious rhizome, and heat-like flowers, followed by a bright red berry. Due to its bright colour and pleasant smell, it is an old-time Christmas green, used for fragrance, flavoring, and festooning.

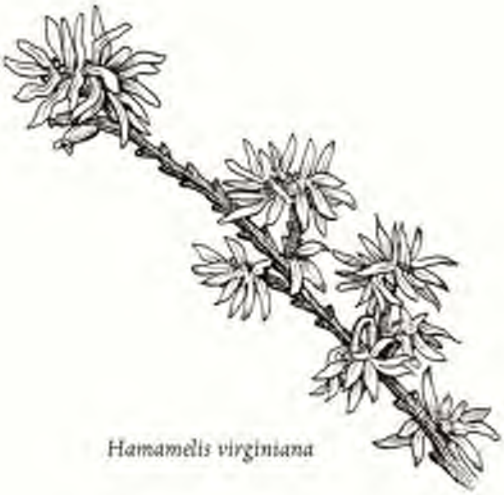
The leaves, berries and bark are the parts used. Medicinally, Wintergreen is balsamic and contains Methyl salicylate, whose flavor characteristics define the taste associated with the plant. Native Americans employed the fruits to invigorate the stomach, and the infused leaves used in small amounts yield a valued digestive tea. Berries of the related *Gaultheria hispidula*, or Creeping Snowberry, lend a piquance to liqueurs and brandies. In higher doses, Methyl salicylate is used as topical analgesic in liniments. In former times, official pharmacy valued Oil of True Gaultheria, and when used as a flavoring it was considered superior to Oil of Birch.

Its prime planetary correspondence lies with Saturn, and its occult properties are purifying, healing, and spiritual antisepsis. Its power is frequently expressed through its fragrant smoke. In North America, the Wintergreen known as Salal (*Gaultheria shallon*) was smoked by the Chinooks and Makah as a stimulating kinnickinnick, usually in combination with other herbs such as Bearberry (*Arctostaphylos* spp.). In China, the leaves of native species *Gaultheria fragrantissima* are a frequent ingredient in traditional incense mixtures. According to ethnobotanist Richard Evans Schultes, an unidentified species of *Gaultheria* has been noted as a vision-producing plant in the Peruvian Andes.

WITCH HAZEL

Hamamelis virginiana; *Hamamelis* spp.
Hamamelidaceæ (Witch Hazel Family)

A DECIDUOUS tree attaining heights from 3 to 10 meters, having light brown bark, oval leaves, with spidery inflorescences of pale yellow to orange blooming in winter. Native to the eastern North America, it ranges from the Canadian Maritimes to Minnesota, and south from Texas to Florida. The seeds are borne in a capsule not unlike hazelnuts and are prized as sacred beads by certain Native American groups in the tree's endemic range, such as the Menominee. When the seeds are ripe, the tree may ejaculate them to a distance of 10 meters. The genus *Hamamelis* has six species distributed in the northern hemisphere, four in North America and two in Asia.



Hamamelis virginiana

Its virtues in medicine are primarily as an astringent due to its tannin content, but it has been used as an anti-rheumatic, febrifuge, emetic, and antibiotic as well. The much-esteemed Witch Hazel topical is prepared by boiling bark and twigs into a strong decoction and diluting the strained liquid with an identical volume of grain alcohol, of at least 75% ABV. Witch Hazel is formerly official in both the United States and British pharmacopœias; important chemical constituents include saffrole, Calcium oxalate, carvacrol, and eugenol.

Branches of Witch Hazel were employed in the 18th century for dowsing precious metals, similar to the branches of the Hornbeam, which are employed for water-witching in England. In the Ozark mountain communities of North America, a forked branch of Witch Hazel is often employed for *witch-wiggling*, or dowsing for water, the tree thought to be particularly sensitive to subterranean aqueous currents.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF WITCH HAZEL

Withdrawal, Contraction, Alleviation, Perspicacity, Discernment, Reserve, Deftness, Humility, Unobtrusiveness, Calculation, Foresight, Sequestered Nobility, and Hidden Fortitude.

WITCH'S BROOMS

LIKE evil fruits, Witch's Brooms are found darkly clustered in the branches of trees, dense and hoary clumps of twigs suggestive of a tumbleweed or a bird's nest. Their unnerving appearances are usually spherical, and characterized by stunted or excess plant growth, as well as malformation and tight clustering of shoots, malformation, denudation of leaves and a discoloration generally evocative of rot. Some waft an unpleasant odor redolent of *excrementum*.

Although their hideous forms suggest they are parasites of the tree, they are in fact the warped tissue of the tree itself, the outward excrescence of infectious disease caused by a number of plant pathogens. Thus, they are the tree's immune response to the invading parasite. Many of these are fungi, such as those in the genus *Taphrina*, which is notorious for attacking Birch. I have encountered Witch's Brooms in a number of tree species, particularly Cherries, especially where the tree has been cast into shade by competing trees in the canopy. Although their forms are clearly evocative of witches, they are unsuited for use as brooms, at least none of the kind usually conceived in the human mind.

SELECTED TREES HOSTING WITCH'S BROOMS

Beech
Birch
Cacao
Cherry
Elder
Hawthorn
Hazel
Hornbeam
Jujube
Linden
Oak
Pine
Plum
Spruce

In accord with the doctrines of planetary correspondence, Witch's Brooms are allied with the malignant emanations of Saturn. Their magical essences are unique, best understood as a chaotic derangement of the endemic occult powers of their host trees. Thus, the magnanimous, queenly and stately nature of the Birch becomes, when twisted into the form of the Witch's Broom, haglike, withdrawn & malevolent. A witch's broom may be considered a demonic form of its host tree, as well as a spirit-trap for that demon. As such, it may be used either for projective demonic magic, or for the absorption of malign influence.

The Witch's Broom is aligned with the ancient shades known as the Harpies, the shrieking storm-maidens whose visceral forms were half bird of prey, half woman. In Greek traditions they made their nests in the warped branches of trees, which were believed to be indwelt by the souls of suicides.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF THE WITCH'S BROOM

Mutation, Horror, Usurpation, Entanglement, Hyperplasia, Mania, Hyﬅeria, Monﬅrosity, Overweening Canker, Virulent Efflux, Perverse Apoptosis, Vindiﬄive Incarceration, and Concentrated Wrath.

The Cult of the Undying Corpse

A DISTURBING reality of incarnation is *discarnation,* not solely for the loss of mortal exiﬅence, but for the alarmingly swift egress of the soul and cataﬅrophic collapse of the body. The odorous offenses of cadaverine, grotesquely bloated abdomens, exposed bone and ravaged fascia; the horror of visceral decay muﬅ surely have been a point of philosophical radicalization for archaic humanity. As such, the concerns of both the spiritual world (magic and religion) and aeﬅhetics (sensual appeal) ﬅood ready to provide powerful intercessors in the form of plants.

That which served to retard putrefaction, creating in the cadaver a simulacrum of its former personhood, also soothed the sensoria of the grieving who yet lived, and potentiated the holiness of the deceased. In addition to mineral agents, the potent leaves, flowers, barks, and resins of the ancient embalmer all lent their unique anti-putrefactive properties to the dead body, rendering it a being *beyond* mere bones and sinew, beyond life and death. Though the art of mummification was practiced by diverse cultures, we might consider Egypt to have developed it as both a science and a high magical art, given the amassed research of its three thousand-year tradition.

Several years ago, I attended the private funeral of a siﬅer of the Carmelite Order. Ensconced in dark hills overlooking the Pacific Ocean, the magnificent Cypress-shadowed monaﬅery hoﬅed a few ﬅalwart souls whose rule was defined by famously ﬅrict spiritual vows, including twenty-three hours of silence each day. This siﬅer had lived into her mid-eighties, and her body bore all the signs of time, ﬅress, and mortal decay. Yet following her death, she appeared no older than twenty, fresh-faced and radiant, and, importantly, emanating subtle balsamic fragrances. My companion also marveled at the perfect sight of her, and later we reflected that miracles—be they of the Hand of Chriﬅ, or of the ancient and cloistered traditions of embalming given to mankind by the great arboreal gods of the desert—were alive and well in the twenty-firﬅ century.

Monaﬅic hiﬅories abound with accounts of the marvelous exudations that poured forth from crypts containing these bodies, provoking wonder in those who partook. During the crucial periods of translation of Chriﬅian relics, the bodies of saints were disinterred and dressed anew, often with addition of fresh spices and resins. In the early modern era some corpses were in fact preserved in camphorated spirits of wine, with Myrrh, as was the body of Lord Nelson after his death in the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805. Paradoxically, tree resin, so important to the preservation of bodies as well as to antibacterial activity, itself is often a response to pathogenic activity in a tree, or to wounding.

Marsilio Ficino's *Three Books on Life* (1489) features a great many herbal formulae for longevity in addition to a complete philosophy of human suﬅenance, guided by attainment of harmony with the planets. Many of his receipts qualify as mithridates, supreme tonics which are universal antidotes to poison. Ficino's pharmaceutical ﬅrategy relies on the prevention of rottenness in the body and its continual refreshment; not surprisingly, many of the plants comprising these formulae also featured in mummification: cinnamon, saffron, myrrh, maﬅic, and frankincense. Esoterically, the receipts may be considered to function in an anti-putrefactive manner similar to the arts of mummification; the progressive infusion of living tissue with sacred plants rendering the body 'preserved' whilﬅ yet alive.

Likewise, the corpse itself, left to the hands of Nature, sometimes became a habitation for wild plants, whose properties were considered sacred, medicinal, or harboring powers of magic. Beans planted inside a ritually-inhumed human head, once sprouted and fruited, were said to convey the power of invisibility to the sorcerer of sufficient spiritual fortitude. The perverted tree which grew from Adam's skull was the very Cross of Golgotha, whose magic endarkened the world, and in time usurped the power of the very Tree whose forbidden fruit he ate.

Cranium Moss, also known as *Muscus Cranio* and *Usnea Humanum*, was the 'moss' (*Usnea* spp.) which grew naturally upon human skulls, and thought to have healing virtues, frequently employed in physic against epilepsy, convulsions and diseases of the head. Most commonly this was in fact various lichens. In several respects Skull Moss is linked with *mumia*, or rectified preparation of human cadaver. A medicine sometimes derived from pulverized Egyptian mummies, and sometimes manufactured from new corpses, it was known to alchemist and apothecary, and a good number of appalling recipes for its manufacture are preserved.

In England, in addition to its value as a medical therapeutic, Cranium Moss was also employed as a magical amulet. In my own visitations of graveyard and crypt, I have encountered precious few exposed human remains, and none bearing the prized *Muscus ex Cranio Humano* known to healers and apothecaries of old. Wandering the Brecon Beacons I have crossed paths with the occasional bleached sheep skull, partially greened with both moss, algae or lichen. Having long been denuded of fleshly rot, these portions I have gathered and used for the generation of both wines and spirits, thus to serve as an inspired substitute.

⁂

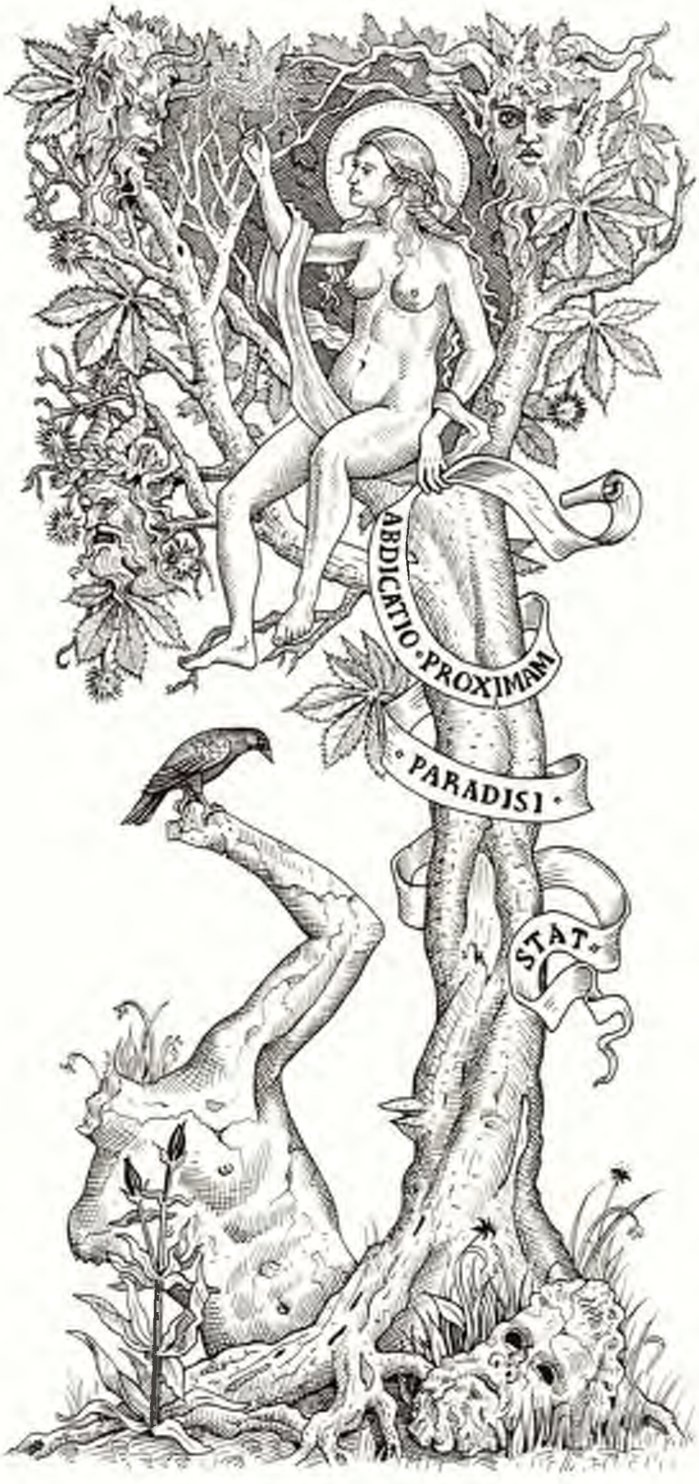
An essential ontological feature of the 'vegetation god' is his waxing strength, fruited glory, death and resurrection. Emergent from the mythology of the seasons and agriculture, the cycle links such arenas as warfare and agriculture, the relationship poetically characterized as swords and plowshares. The perennial gnosis of the god is thus a transcendent fecundation, whether it be of the living body, or the land as nourished by the corpse. In either reality, the divine force of *viriditas* triumphs, not only stealing the pall of death, but indeed rendering it a necessary prerequisite of life itself.

And yet there is another intersection of death with the laws of the field: disease and famine. Plant pathology is a complex and underappreciated science, based as it is on the meticulous examination and diagnoses of every conceivable botanical affliction and morbidity. Presentation of symptoms can be both gross and subtle. Abutting the category of disease is that of decline, a gradual reduction in vigor which can shorten the life of a plant but can take its time; in the case of trees, years or decades.

States of harm or stress to plants can also give rise to some of their most valued and powerful hypostases. This power is brought about in many forms we may liken not to thriving vegetation god, nor his dead body, but a third and liminal state trapped in stasis, hovering between life and death.

Consider *Botrytis cinerea*, a mold regarded as a pestilence by floriculturists, who work to eradicate it from such prized crops as Begonias. For those gardeners who have encountered botrytis in this context, their minds will hold an indelible association with stench and withered stems and petioles, and blasted fruits. Yet in the sphere of viticulture, the botrytis fungus is the primary agency responsible for 'divine rot', without which Sauternes, Trockenbeerenauslese, and other precious and distinctive European wines —known for their complex and otherworldly flavors— would not be.

The pattern repeats throughout Nature and interpenetrates the communion between plant and human. The Frankincense trade, at one time a major financial driver of the ancient world, would not be possible without the deliberate infliction of wounds in the tree, in order to harvest resin. Thus, what religion and magic burn to attain an empowered or divine state is in fact scabs torn from the flesh of wounded trees. Vanilla, an orchid whose characteristic flavor is associated with love and pleasure, is a product of the parasitization of its host tree. The hallowed Belgian tradition of Lambic beer requires supplication at the altar of the wild yeasts, organisms which the vast majority of commercial brewers view as chaotic contaminants and seek to exclude from their worts. We may exalt the spiritual potencies



and powers of Vanilla, Sandalwood and Oud... but are obliged to also consider the reality that they are vampires.

The leaf-clad Green Man, known for his fecundating qualities, is naturally aligned with and emblematized by Nitrogen, the element essential for vegetative growth. As one of a holy trinity of elements necessary for plant growth—the others being potassium and phosphorus—it facilitates the building of the body of the plant and its 'greening': the profusion of leaves, ſtems and shoots. The dark side of the Green Man is, of course, the decomposing corpse and its gradual reclamation by the soil. Here, too, is Nitrogen: forming putrescine ($NH_2[CH_2]_4NH_2$) and a hoſt of other nitrogenous compounds, ultimately begetting 'fertilizer'.

The hoary romance of the ancient vegetation god, despite its violence, conveys the soothing spiritual balm of resurrection, as did that of the Chriſt which followed him. Yet in our haſte to embrace such ideas, let us not neglect the entirety of the continuum. Verily, let us taſte of the living and know that it is good...but also sup within the walls of the sepulcher and know the sublime divinity to be found within rotten things.

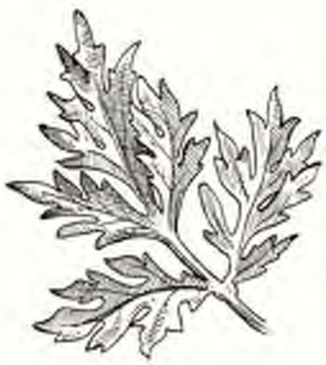
WOOD SORREL

Oxalis acetosella; Oxalis spp.
Oxalidaceæ (Oxalis Family)

WOOD Sorrel is a small woodland herb reaching 15 cm in height, having a creeping rhizome, trefoil leaves and white, purple-veined blossoms. The leaves and flowers exhibit a propensity for drooping when night falls, or with the approach of ſtorms. The leaves are tart, but not unpleasantly so.

Its powers of physick are diuretic, astringent, and hepatic; and it falls under the planetary dominions of the Moon and Venus. There is some folk-use of the infusion to treat urinary tract infections, as well as an external treatment for boils, dermatitis, and venereal sores. Native Americans used the herb to remove lip tumours. Excessive internal use should be avoided due to the presence of oxalic acid, which can upset the ſtomach and affect calcium levels in the bones.

In Native American traditions, the Menominee used the plant for tattooing, specifically for the talismanic effects deterring future afflictions. Owing to its cloverlike leaf-form, it is also occasionally classed smong the shamrock amulets, and favored as an amulet againſt the Evil Eye.



WORMWOOD

Artemisia absinthium

Asteraceæ (Sunflower Family)

AT the scintillant boundary of silver and green, and in the place which lies between revulsion and attraction, Wormwood dwells: alluring, yet strongly warded with a bitterness unparalleled. The would-be sybarite, seeking its communion through the absinthe cup, is soon instructed on the plant's own harsh terms. The same piercing, penetrating, warming, and personally disruptive power of the plant may be experienced by chewing a single fresh leaf of the plant.

Artemisia absinthium is perennial herb native to Europe, growing to one meter in height, having gray-green divided leaves and pale yellow, tight composite blossoms in the summertime. The herb prefers full sun and well-drained soils. The taste is strongly aromatic and astringent; the Christian mystic Joseph of Cupertino, known for his ectstatic visions and severe asceticism, carried a bitter and vile-tasting powder made from the harshest Wormwood, which he sprinkled upon the little food that he ate. The portions of the plant used are the leaves, and, infrequently, the flowers. Aside from its use as an aperitif, the leaves may be used as ritual incense, or smoked, as in the manner of Mugwort, to induce mild euphoria.

From the perspective of herbal medicine, its actions on the human body are narcotic, stimulant, convulsant, phytognostic, emmenagogue, vermifuge, aromatic bitter, tonic and hepatic. Excessive use of Wormwood tea can provoke dizziness, blurred vision, muscle cramps, and irritation of the renal system. The ancient Greek gynecologist Soranus of Ephesus prescribed vaginal suppositories of Wormwood and its oil to induce abortion. Disoscorides affirms the use of Wormwood in wine, and that the herb was also drunk as a tonic in Thrace. The White Wormwood, *Artemisa herba-alba*, known in Arabic as as *shīeḥ* (الشيح) is used in some magical cures in North Africa.

In the Doctrine of Signatures, Wormwood has been variously assigned the planetary powers of Mercury, Venus, and Mars. This threefold celestial alignment is well founded, as rulership depends on the portion of the plant, and the use to which the plant is put. As utilized in magic and ritual, its occult properties are Healing, Allure, Funerary, Summoning, Necromancy, Exorcism, Protection from Maleficia, Ward against Noxious Spirits, and Warfare.

In magical lore, the herb has associations with the dead; in Europe, Wormwood was used in crematory pyres and planted on graves. It is also one of several herbs comprising a magical ink in an ancient Graeco-Egyptian spell for questioning corpses. Another magical ink for general magical use appears in a medieval recipe, calling for Wormwood juice, along with that of Mulberry, Vetch, and other sundry ingredients.

The Spirit-Retinue of Wormwood

Incandescence, Astringency, Circulation, Prophecy, Revival, Dilation, Virid Enticement, Fleshly Appeal, Warm Efflux, Argent Flame, Burning Onslaught, Constricting Bitterness, and Forceful Expulsion.

The plant was also treasured by folk magicians for the protection it afforded. Cunning folk used it to exorcise disease-causing spirits from sick persons; Garlic and absinthe were the magical weapons of the Romanian *călușari*. According to the 14th century writer Arnoldo de Villanova, a bunch of Wormwood hung on the door was a prophylactic charm against *maleficia*. In the magical plant traditions of Northern Peru, the fresh leaves of the herb are a valued armament against maledictive magic, as are ritual baths made therefrom. These usages of the herb as a magical armament mirror its action within the human body against intestinal worms.

Russian esoteric traditions reckon Wormwood as the herb of forgetfulness, and in that land the plant is also associated with serpents. In particular, it is the herb of the Serpent Queen, who bestows the power of speech, and knowledge of the magical uses of plants.

An old European travelling-charm employs a sprig or bundle of Wormwood, kept at all times on the person while traveling. The herb was employed principally as a protection against dangers, but also to refresh the spirits and envigorate the mind.

Wormwood added to tea in a Moroccan spell causes quarrels for 3 days between those who drink it together. Wormwood is also used as a Sudanese suffumigant for exorcism of the body.

Many modern herbal writers, and to a lesser extent, practitioners of herbal medicine, are quick to condemn this herb an unsafe poison, and more specifically its active principle thujone ($C_{10}H_{16}O$). This propagandistic drumbeat has continued with modern producers of absinthe, who must, by law, remove the thujone from their wares. Coupled with this one encounters an almost hysterical insistence that thujone has no psychoactive properties.

While it is indeed classed as a convulsant, toxicity studies are inevitably skewed. According to the most draconian of extant toxicological studies, the amount of thujone recognized as minimally toxic is 30 mg of thujone per kilogram of body weight—the equivalent of 1200 glasses of absinthe drunk at once. Additionally, many studies cited as proof of absinthe's venomous propensity are derived by injecting essential oils (of Wormwood and other herbs in absinthe) into rats. In times past, before the drink was banned, distillers of commerical absinthe were known to add poisons such as copper sulfate for coloring and antimony chloride for attaining opacity upon dilution, and this no doubt had a frustrating effect on symptoms of absinthism.

Thujone is to be found in a number of herbs. Aside being present in varying quantities of most *Artemisia* speices, there is thujone present in Common Sage (*Salvia officinalis*) Arborvitae trees (*Thuja* spp.), and Tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*). Other *Salvia* species have been found to contain small amounts.

> When the man and the woman intend conjunction, let him anoint his yard with oyle of mastick, and wormewood mingled with a few graines of musk and civet; and let the woman also anoynt her privie parts therewith, as well within as without; for by this meanes there is raised mutuall inclination to Venery, and the seed is received with a greater pleasure, and is more duely retained and elaborated.
>
> NICHOLAS FONTANUS
> *The Woman's Doctour*, 1652

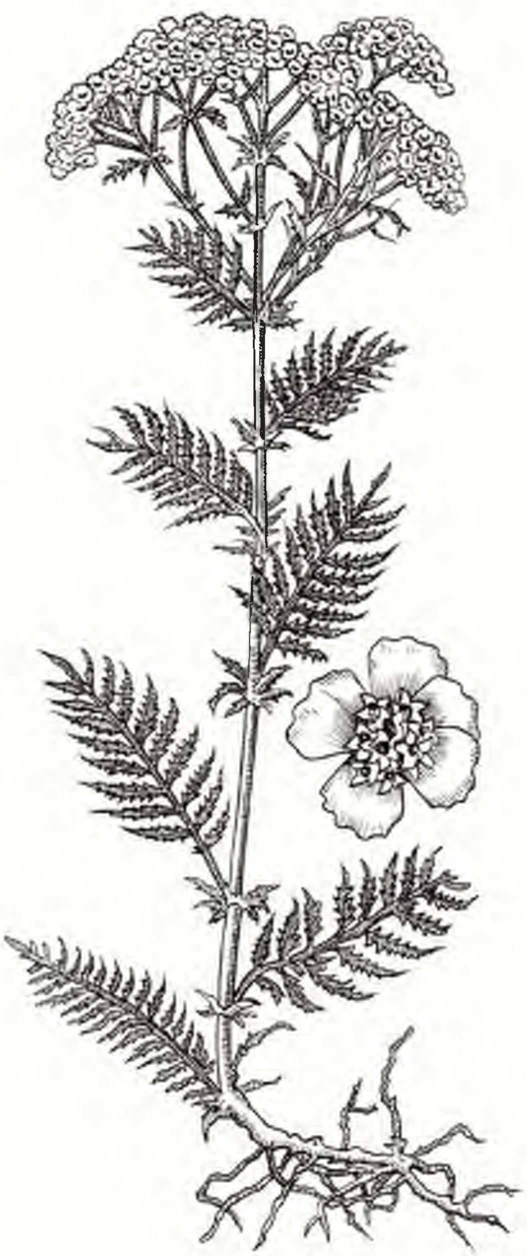
Both common Wormwood (*A. absinthium*) and Roman Wormwood (*A. pontica*) were used in Absinthe. Distillers variously added Fennel, seed of Anise, Hyssop, Calamus, Lemon Balm, Angelica, Star Anise, Juniper, Nutmeg, and Veronica as flavoring adjuncts in a maceration with rectified spirit. The resulting tincture was distilled, either after an addition of water or without. Modern liqueurs such as Chartreuse, Benedictine and Vermouth are made with Wormwood, among other herbs, but in amounts so sparing as to make a comparison between these and Absinthe trivial.

The plant philosopher and poet Dale Pendell, who grew and worked extensively with the plant, distilled his own absinthe under the *botanikos* nomen long before the legalization of the thujone-free variety. His recipe followed that of Dr. Pierre Ordinaire, though with some significant personal adjustments to ingredients and alchemical method, and I still regard it as the best I have tried. Pendell's relationship with Wormwood might be said to have embodied the virtues of Artemis Aristoboule, the Athenian epithet of the virgin goddess, meaning "the best advisor". Pendell also made a remarkable healing salve whose chief ingredient was Wormwood, an ointment whose efficacy in remedying skin wounds I can unreservedly attest to.

CORRESPONDENCES

Powers: Protection, Fortification, Healing, Purification.
Element: Fire.
Planets: Venus, Mars, Mercury.
Deific Forms: Artemis.
Asterism: Scorpio.
Domain: Steppe.
Divine Appellation: Blood of Hephaistos.
Alchemical Concept: Purgatio.
Therapeutic: Philautía.

Affliction: Parsimony.
Sacrament: Bitter Herbs (מרור).
Corporeal Locus: Endocrine System.
Corporeal Action: Reverie.
Eponymous Compounds: Absinthin.
Embodied State: Wise Reserve.
Atavistic Power: Plant-Animal Communion.
Emblem: A horned nymph in green raiment, holding three arrows in her left hand and a silver cup in her right hand.



YARROW

Achillea millefolium; Achillea spp.
Asteraceæ (Sunflower Family)

AN herb common in the wild and in cultivation, Milfoil, as Yarrow is also known, has glaucous, feathery leaves and flat-topped inflorescences. It is native to the northern hemisphere, including the United States, and naturalized far beyond. Wild species readily hybridize; there are many commercial cultivars of Yarrow available in a great variety of flower colors. The portions most utilized are the leaves, flowers, and occasionally the essential oil, which is a deep blue color owing to the presence of azulene.

Its medicinal properties are astringent, anti-inflammatory, antipyretic, spasmolytic, diaphoretic, carminitive, stimulant, stomachic, and tonic. Those knowledgeable in herbal healing will recount many a tale of miraculous cures effected by Yarrow on dire wounds: it has a superb resonance with the connective and venous tissues and may be used externally for wounds to stop bleeding and promote tissue repair. In North Africa, especially Libya, *Achillea maritime* has long enjoyed use as a febrifuge.

The beneficent properties of Yarrow were at one time invoked at weddings, where it was known that carrying sprigs of the herb would ensure seven years of nuptial harmony. The herb was regarded by the Navajo as an aphrodisiac, and in Ozark magic it was added to love potions. These uses are magnification of the plant's tendency to cause elation, and indeed the fermented preparations using Yarrow known as *gruit* demonstrate this effect.

Among the Kawaiisu tribes of California, the plant was prized as a rattlesnake medicine, the powdered leaves rubbed into the wound to counter the venom. Folklore indicated that the medicine also attracted snakes, so the cure was kept at a safe distance from the dwelling.

Yarrow is one of the Nine Holy Herbs traditionally gathered for power on Midsummer Eve (June 23), along with St. Johns Wort, Corn Marigold, Mugwort, Plantain, Dwarf Elder, Ivy, Vervain, and Orpins. On this same night, the herb was used in East Anglia to avert spells and sickness by scattering on doorsteps.

The Spirit-Retinue of Yarrow

Restitution, Revival, Alliance, Hardiness,
Organization, Bright Efflux, Arrested
Hemorrhage, Solar Benison,
Reserved Beauty, and
Wise Counsel.

To dream of Yarrow is generally regarded as a beneficent omen. The dried stalks of the herb were used by Druids for divination, and by Chinese sorcerers for *I Ching*. Yarrow leaves were also widely used in the British Isles for love divination. Traditionally, Yarrow plucked from a grave then placed beneath one's pillow will bring dreams of one's future beloved. A Hebridean charm employed the leaves held over the eyes to awaken the powers of second sight.

As a suffumigant it has a rich and diverse history of Native American use. The Ojibwa esteemed the flower heads of *Achillea millefoilum* as a powerful ceremonial smudge, and as a valued addition to the kinnikinnick smoking mixtures. The Potawotomi held it in similar repute and smoldered the dried flower heads on hot coals to rid an area of infectious spirits and maledictive sorcerers. Many North American tribes also prized the dried flowers in smoking mixtures or as a tobacco substitute.

CORRESPONDENCES

Magical Powers: Binding, Demonifuge, Exorcism, Love-Charm, Healing, Divination.
Element: Air.
Planet: Venus.
Deific Forms: Chiron, Achilles.
Domain: Battlefield.
Alchemical Concept: Coagulation.
Virtue: Restitution.
Body Part: Skin.
Magical Gesture: Entreating the Oracle.
Emblem: A fountain of blood springs from a human hand, from which a tree emerges.

YERBA BUENA

Clinopodium douglasii
Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

THE 'Good Herb' is a perennial, aromatic herb with glossy ovate leaves, creeping stems, and white flowers, growing from 10 to 20 cm in height. It is native to California, where it prefers the fog-cooled Coast Ranges, as well as the Pacific Northwest. Because of its diminutive size and preference for shade, it can easily be overlooked in the wild, but its beguiling fragrance, once released into the air, announces its presence unambiguously.

Though it may appear as a wholly 'savage' herb, rambling in the forest understory, it adapts well to the garden, provided certain rules are followed. Give it some shade, a bit of protection, don't let it dry out, but don't assume that because it is a mint it wishes to lie in a sodden bed. Oak and Madrone understory are desirable. Like most plants in the Mint family, it can be propagated by layering. When using wild material for medicine, one should take care to avoid gathering material growing near Poison Oak, as they may sometimes share the same plant communities.

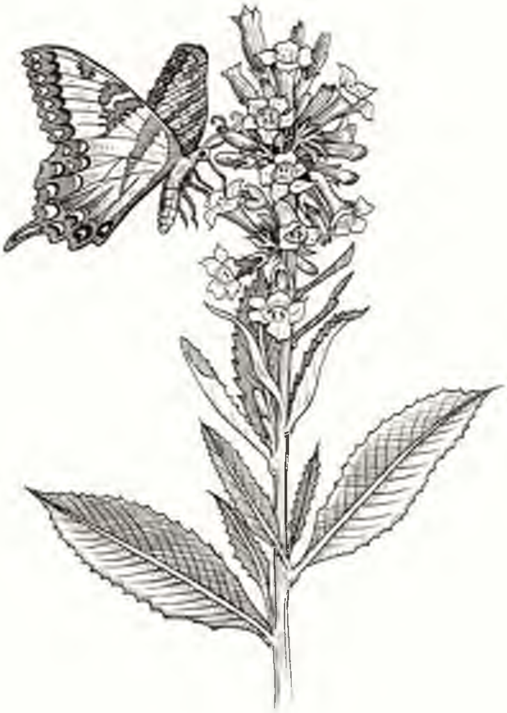
Yerba Buena's aromatic profile is as perfect as any lamiaceous plant could be, at once green, floral, spicy, and with an elusive component suggesting both wood and fruit. Where certain Mints crush with aromatic force, it seduces with subtlety; where Winter Savory burns with masculine fire, it soothes with feminine grace.

Its versatility is demonstrated by its sheer number of uses in Native American medicine, from cold remedies to perfume to antiparasitic formulae. The Yurok of California used the infusion of leaves as an aphrodisiac. I have long regarded it as our own native Satyrion: Yerba Buena was formerly classed as *Satureja douglasii*, a Savory. Its planetary affinities are with Venus and Mercury, and its magical essence is an arousing restorative, both to the soul and body.

Tea is made by simple hot infusion. Steep 35 freshly harvested leaves in one cup boiling water and strain. Add honey if desired; the strength of the aromatics may vary from plant to plant, so one may adjust the amount of plant material upward or downward as desired. Because its fragrance contains 'green' notes it may be readily combined with other leaves; because it also has floral notes one may include flowers.

The Spirit-Retinue of Yerba Buena

Equipoise, Refreshment, Virid Inspiration, Generosity, Practicality, Delight, Fancy, Easement, Flirtation, Amorous Expression, Collaboration, Parity, and Refined Presentation.



YERBA SANTA

Eriodichtyon californicum
Boraginaceæ (Borage Family)

UPON the wending path through the sun-drenched chaparral stands the Holy Herb, a powerful plant of great Solar affinity and healing virtue, setting its sublime fragrance upon the warm air. Yerba Santa, as it is known to the simpler, is a shrub growing to 1.5 meters, with glossy, resinous lanceolate leaves and pale blue, lavender, or white flowers. Formerly classed in the Waterleaf family (Hydrophyllaceae), it has since been reclassified as belonging to the Borage or Forget-Me-Not Family. It typically inhabits the sloped chaparral plant communities in California, Arizona, New Mexico, and northern Mexico, and is known for its hardy adaptations including rapid succession after wildfires, and the revegetation of eroded or unstablized slopes. In stark contrast to Yerba Santa, a relative of the same genus, Poodle-dog Bush (*Eriodichtyon parryi*) secretes a noxious odor and provokes a blistering rash when touched.

In areas where it has accreted traditions of human use, Yerba Santa has been known by various names such as Mountain Balm, Consumptive's Weed, Gum Bush, and by one of its many indigenous names Jompom Saywy. Its powers in traditional magic include protection from disease and noxious spirits. In some habitats, the plant is threatened or critically endangered, while in others it can be sustainably harvested.

The Spirit-Retinue of Yerba Santa

Recuperation, Amelioration, Asepsis, Orientation, Renewal, Awakening, Effectuation, Reassurance, Counterinsurgency, Noble Interdiction, Preserving Fire, Aromatic Epiphany, and Equitable Passion.

In plant medicine, the Sainted Herb excels in treating respiratory complications. The balsamic, resinous virtue contains the medicinal power, linked to a complex arrayment of flavonones, and the dried leaves, as well as the tincture made from them, retain their medicinal power in storage for a long period. An effective tea for soothing bronchial spasm may be made from steeping 3–4 broken leaves in a cup of boiling water for 15 minutes. The leaves also yield a virtuous tincture, which can be taken liberally for respiratory complaint, or in smaller amounts as a winter tonic. The tincture is made from 15 fresh or dried leaves steeped in 200 ml spirits of wine. Inhaled smoke from the burning leaves was also a traditional remedy for colds.

Traditionally the herb is burnt as a smudge to expel noxious spirits which contaminate the household, or otherwise aggravate disease. In small amounts, the crushed leaf may be used as an adjunct to lend an intriguing and pleasurable flavor to ritual smoking mixtures.

Desert Spirits Incense

The haunted and desolate locales of playa, arroyo, and *cañon* have served as the sanctuary of prophecy and mystical revelation from ancient times, and are home to their own retinue of plant allies. This coarse incense, invoking the atmospheres of these lands, derives its power from plants of the deserts of Western North America, but its usage is appropriate for any desert *genius*, and indeed for the work of prophecy. The formulation given is calibrated for the exaltation of Yerba Santa, thus inclining its atmosphere toward meditation and theurgical rite. A modification of the proportions may increase its visionary and ecstatic virtue by doubling the proportion of the Coyote Tobacco (*Nicotiana attenuata*).

Yerba Santa leaf, dry	30 g
Protium copal resin, dry	20 g
Artemisia tridentata, dry leaf	10 g
Coyote Tobacco, dry leaf	5 g

℄ Grind the entirety to a fine green powder and store in a sealed vessel.

YEW

Taxus baccata, *Taxus* spp.

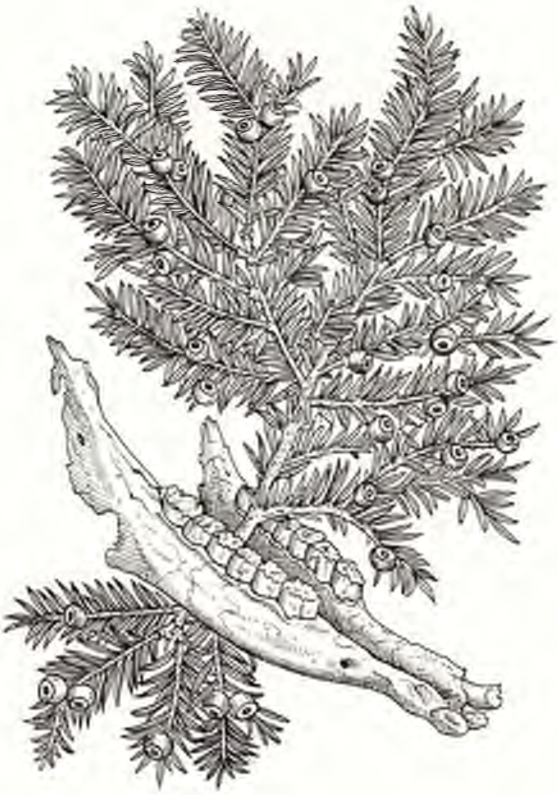
Taxaceæ (Yew Family)

A LONG-LIVED evergreen tree native to Europe and Britain, with flat, lanceolate leaves and as seed cones. Its bark is reddish and sometimes flaky; its hard wood suitable for carving and turning. American species include *Taxus americana*, and the near-threatened Pacific Yew (*T. brevifolia*). The tree bore the old Celtic name Eburos, as recorded by Caesar; the alchemists knew it as Zaocel, and its pitch was called Abir. Many older Yews are found in churchyards associated with sacred pre-Christian sites, but some also attain great age and hoary appearance in the wild. The generic name *Taxus* is related to the Greek *toxon* (bow) and *toxicon* (arrow-poison).

Most parts of the tree are toxic. The pharmaceutical Taxol, derived from the Pacific Yew, has been used to treat diverse cancers. The fruits possess sedative and nervine qualities and have been used in folk medicine as anti-epileptics. The inner wood, when boiled and mordanted with alum, provides a range of burnt orange colors in traditional dyes.

The poisonous components of Yew are taxin and taxicatin; the needles, especially in the winter, contain the greatest amount of plant venoms, reaching an upward concentration of 2%. Thirty berries are fatal for an adult, or a decoction of 50–100 grams of needles. In the body, the poison acts rapidly. Symptoms include dilation of pupils, abdominal pains, vomiting, palour, diarrhea, unconsciousness and death by heart failure. The ancient Irish were said to use a compound of Yew seed, Hellebore and Devil's Bit Scabious for poisoning their weapons. In ancient Iberia, T. *baccata* was used to commit suicide.

Yew is a tree of Saturn; its occult powers are Death, Necromancy, Immortality, and Purification. Its station within graveyards makes it a natural locus of ancestral devotion; Yews that seem dead or diseased will often send forth new branches, hence its association with dead, regeneration, and longevity. Its wood is exceedingly durable, and objects made from it can last millennia. In some English funerary customs, Yew sprigs were tucked into the burial shroud.

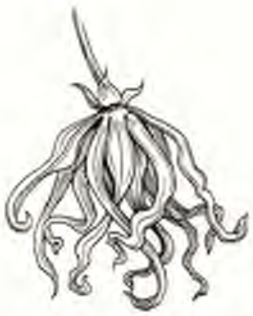


In many realms the Yew inhabits, bringing braches of the tree into the house is thought to attract spirits of calamity. In Greek lore, the Yew was sacred to the Furies, the goddesses of vengeance. Several streams of European lore hold that the Yew is inhabited by malevolent faeries, who will abduct or drive mad those who sleep beneath the tree.

The plant folklorist Margaret Baker reports use of Yew in Shropshire for fashioning wands. A Yew branch, according to British lore, possessed the ability to lead the one who held it to a lost object.

THE SPIRIT-RETINUE OF YEW

Remembrance, Continuity, Preservation, Bereavement,
Eternity, Adumbration, Inhumation, Martyrdom,
Sacrifice, Prescience,
Woeful Majesty, Perfumed
Adyta, and Infernal
Augury.



YLANG YLANG

Cananga odorata var. *genuina*
Anonaceæ (Soursop Family)

YLANG-YLANG or Kananga is an evergreen tree native to tropical Asia growing to to 20 meters in height, having glossy leaves and masses of yellow, mauve, or pink 6-petaled flowers. These pleasing blossoms are thereupon succeded by oblong fruits. The floral scent, expressed in essential oil, bears an odorous kinship to Jasmine. Ylang Ylang is used as a timber tree in Sri Lanka.

In folk medicine it is recognized as an aphrodisiac, antidepressant, antiseptic, euphoric, nervine, and circulatory stimulant. The oil has also been used topically to soothe the bites of noxious insects.

The portions used are the flowers and their essential oil. The latter is used as a fixative when blending perfumes. Of these there are four commercial grades. The first distillation, considered the best, is called Extra; the other grades, in descending order of quality are One, Two and Three. Inconsistency of aromatic features will definitely occur from grade to grade, and even within a grade. Essential oil of *Cananga odorata* var. *genuina*, or True Ylang Ylang, is considered far superior to that of C. *odorata*, also called Cananga Oil. The latter is considerably less expensive and has an inferior scent.

The tree is governed by the planetary powers of Venus and Jupiter. Its powers as expressed via charm, spell and ceremony are Lust, Love, Marriage, and happiness. The flowers are worn as a love charm; an Indonesian custom employs the fragrant blossoms, spread upon the bed of a couple on their wedding night.

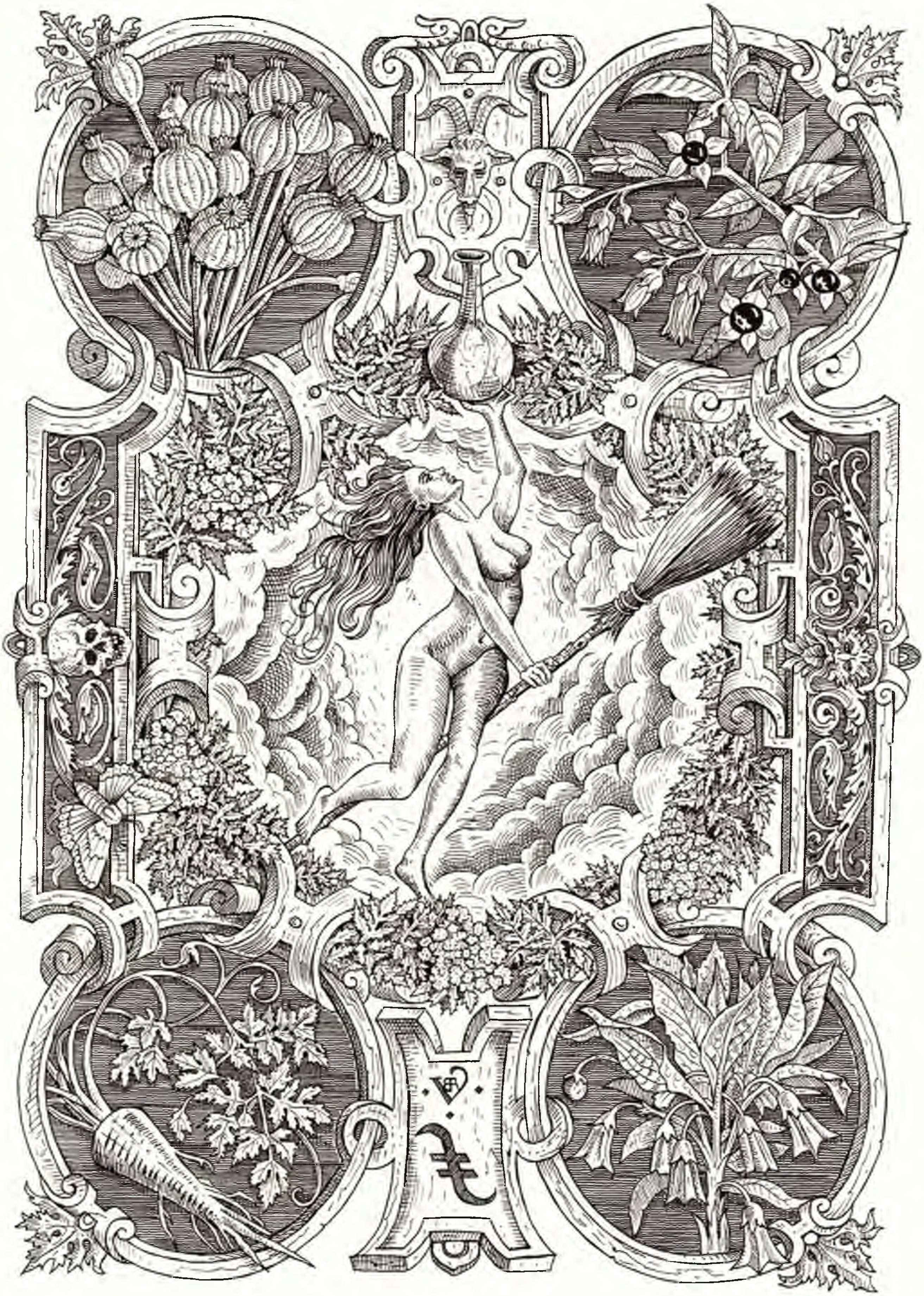
ZUTA LEVANA

Micromeria fruticosa
Lamiaceæ (Mint Family)

KNOWN as *Ishbat* in Arabic, the shrub bearing the Hebrew name *Zuta Levana* is a Salvia-like plant preferring sunny and dry locations, having pale green leaves, white flowers, and growing to 0.5 meters in height. The plant is endemic to Palestine and Israel but may be easily grown in rock gardens and xeric landscapes. The plant also bears the common name Tea Hyssop; botanically, it is considered closely allied to the genus *Satureja*, constituting the Savories. It is one of several plants used as the spice preparation za'atar (زَعْتَر), and indeed in some contexts the plant is also known by this name.

Intensely fragrant, the leaves contain strong concentrations of the toxic aromatic compound pugelone ($C_{10}H_{16}O$), which also contributes a defining odor to Pennyroyal and kindred mint species. Camphor and related compounds are also present. Its flavor is redolent of mint, while also savoring of citrus; it is enjoyed as a refreshing tea and confection for the breath, though the presence of pugelone provides an admonition that consuming it is best avoided by pregnant women.

As a spiritual plant in Islam, it is associated with the dead, and is found in cemeteries. Like Pennyroyal and many Salvias, the leaves of Zuta Levana may be easily dried and retain their fragrance, and can be used in potpourri, incense, infused vinegar, and aromatized washes.



THE WITCH'S GARDEN

ENIGMA: VIRIDITAS

The Bread of the Granary

THE word *viriditas* ('greenness') bespeaks fecundity, growth, and vigor, and was first associated with human health and homeostasis, a functional and sustaining order of biological process. It is a concept strongly associated with the Christian mystic Saint Hildegard of Bingen, who in her visionary 12th-century work *Scivias* conjured the term as a spirituous, life-giving suffusion animating, and proceeding from, the natural world. However, the word's usage preceded her by many centuries, and its span included the concept of mutability, as used by none other than Saint Augustine in his 5th century *On the City of God against the Pagans*. Hildegard's frequent usage of the term links it not only to plants and vegetal creation, but to a kind of divinely inspired growth and development, an essential and virid marrow proceeding from God. Because of the scope of its meaning, *viriditas* must be considered an occult mystery.

This arcanum has profound implications for all who respect and work with plants, including those seeking their spirituous dimensions. *Viriditas* implies an existential state of verdure, embodied in the aggregate vegetal portion of terrestrial life, as well as the whole of its biotic interconnectivity, a notion harmonizing with hylozoism and natural magic. *Viriditas* suggests a kind of plant divinity, in part arising from long aeons of human-botanical intercourse. If God emanates an essential greenness, as Hildegard suggests, it follows that greenness may emanate deity. *Viriditas* is therefore a divine plant power, but also the wondrous actions and deeds proceeding from it—the Green Man and the vegetation he disgorges, both the oracle and the augury. The same may be said of wood-wives and nymphs, their tutelary powers, patronage of place, and tendencies toward union.

This pervasive power is essential to understand, for it binds individual plants to groups, and those groups to bioregions and the humans that they share it with. It also interpenetrates time, linking the accumulated plant wisdom of epochs, even of extinct species, with the present greenness of creation. As such, an individual plant may inform us of its living kindred, its ancestors, and future progeny.

In considering this time-related aspect of *viriditas*, the oldest living plant species, such as conifers, certain ferns, mosses and bryophytes, are of especial importance because, in addition to their legacy of stored virtue, they represent a special class of organism: longtime survivors. They have weathered geological and climate change, mass extinction, genetic challenges, and other stressors which other plants have not; their collective memory of earth is ancient. Accordingly, their lineages, as expressed through genome, preserve information from the dawn of mankind and long before. We may also understand them as presenting examples of survivorship and adaptability we may learn from if we are to thrive in future times. Knowing this, the terms 'inheritance' and 'ancestor worship' assume elevated meanings.

Transmission of botanical knowledge is also a form *viriditas*, in particular its perpetuity as taught and preserved by humans, or as 'discovered' directly from plants. This body of facts, insights, powers and wonderments first originated in a tree or herb, and through winding routes came to persist in the human soul. Traced to a chain of ancestors and byways of information, its ultimate distant source in primeval antiquity is obscure to living memory. Veiled in green mist, this ancient fountain of origination is become luminous, a sap-infused avatar.

This *green knowledge* may be as simple and deeply entrenched as the ability to tell the difference between that which is palatable and that which is not. This is the bewitching, visual allure of fruits: bright colors and sensual shapes set apart from their surroundings, whispering *look at me, take me*. This is also a spell cast over animals, including humankind, the enticement to pollinators and disseminators. Perhaps it was not the Serpent that convinced Eve to eat, but the fruit itself.

In partaking of the spiritual dimensions of plants, we transcend the usual, unquestioned dynamic of the human and botanical worlds—a relic of atheistic agriculture and a science bereft of its inspiring fire of Discovery. In so doing, we experience a different Eucharist: the wisdom of angels, earthed and cloaked in the green mantle. Like al-Khidir and John the Baptist, this 'garden' offers an ethereal wisdom born of the wilderness, where we ourselves once dwelled. Such is the bread of the Granary of the Fauns, the *viriditas* brought forth from the emissaries of root, bough and flower.

*

RELIQUENS
LEGES
CAELESTES
CORPUS
TERRAE
AMPLECTAR.

GLOSSARY

alexipharmick: a theriac, or counterpoison formula.
ally: an entity which provides help.
ampelography: branch of botany concerned with the documentation of grape varietals and lineages.
amrusia: elixir of life.
anodyne: a medicinal agent which mitigates pain.
anti-inflammatory: an agent which reduces inflammation, whether topical or internal.
antiputrescent: an agent which inhibits decay of animal or plant matter after death of the organism, hence a preservative. Many such substances are also antibiotic, and therefore can act upon living tissue to reduce infection.
antiscorbutic: an agent which treats or prevents the condition of scurvy, usually rich in ascorbic acid.
aperient: a mild laxative.
apotropaic: an agent used in magical operations, or religious ritual, for protection from evil.
atavism: latent spirit of pre-incarnate existences, called forth by dream, magic, or appearing as a possessive intrusion.
bidding: magical coercion, commanding.
botanomancy: divination using plants.
cardonium: wine medicated by the addition of medicinal herbs.
carminative: an agent promoting peristalsis, causing the expulsion of wind.
cera: wax
chaplet: a garland of herbs worn on the head.
clissus: the complete union of all essence of one plant into a single empowered and magnified preparation. The term is Paracelsian.
collyrium: a medicament for the eyes, an eyewash.
conditum: a spiced medicinal wine.

cordate: a leaf-shape resembling a heart.

dehiscence: the act of forceful splitting open, as with some seed pods.

demonifuge: an agent used for the expulsion of demons or other noxious spirits.

demulcent: an agent of lubricating, softening, and mollifying tissue.

depurative: that agent which aids in detoxifying the blood.

diaphoretic: an agent which promotes sweating.

dioecious: in botany, the phenomenon wherein a species is characterized sexually by the appearance of male and female flowers on separate individual plants.

diuretic: an agent acting upon the renal system, chiefly increasing flow of the urine.

elaeomancy: divination by observation of the surface of a liquid.

elemental: pre-organic forces of Nature. Classically divided into entic forms of Earth, Air, Fire and Water.

emetic: an agent which compels vomiting.

emmenagogue: promoting or increasing the menstrual flow.

emollient: an agent which softens and causes warmth and moisture.

epispastic: substances which excite an irritating and blistering action upon the skin.

errhine: a preparation applied in the interior of the nose, for increasing nasal secretions.

erotomorphism: classification of a plant primarily by the shape of its sexual organs inflamed in the heat of passion, and reproductive proclivities. Erotomorphism is an unacknowledged, underlying basis for Linnaean plant taxonomy.

escharotic: caustic medication used to dissolve 'proud flesh', that is, fungoid or viral growths (such as warts) or excessive granulations.

exorcism: the forcible expulsion of a demon or evil spirit.

expectorant: an agent which augments and promotes discharge of noxious humors from the lungs.

fabaceous: of, or belonging to, the Fabaceæ, the Pea Family; leguminous.

færie: race of outcast beings inhabiting the spaces between the realms of matter and spirit, often associated with nature and the wilderness. In most folk traditions they are generally hostile toward humanity. In some strands of myth, they are associated with the Fallen Angels, banished from heaven; in others they participate in the realm of the ancestral Dead.

famulus: a familiar spirit, particularly in the context of witchcraft.

galactagogue: in medicine, an agent which promotes lactation.

gargarism: a prepared medicine used as a throat-gargle.

genius loci: a spirit indigenous to a place.

genius: the governing spirit of a thing or place.

glaucous: gray-green or bluish-green in color.

grimoire: a manual of sorcery or magic, typically originating in 13th-19th century Europe, and containing formulae for conjuring and controlling spirits. Also, a general name for the genre comprising such books.

hepatic: in medicine, an agent which strengthens the liver and its functions.

herbarius: one skilled in the knowledge and use of herbs.

house ward: a spirit which protects the home.

lacryma arboris: 'tears of the tree', an archaic name for tree resin.

laudanum: tincture of Opium with the emetic alkaloid narcotine removed; invented by the Swiss alchemist Paracelsus (1493–1541).

lavamentum: a clyster

lebes: a vessel for boiling.

legume: of or belonging to the Fabaceæ, the Pea Family.

lentiform: lens-shaped.

licheniform: having the appearance of a lichen.

ligniform: having the appearance of wood.

linimentum: ointment.

lurid: in archaic systems of botanical classification, a word used to describe a ghastly color, usually indicative of venomous or evil properties.

maleficium: a magical operation worked for the purpose of harm, often of concealed origin. It was later applied by Paracelsus to the inferior acts of deceivers and pretenders to the physician's art.

maliform: having the appearance of an apple fruit.

marc: that portion of a gestating tincture comprising the solid plant material, whose virtues are to be extracted.

medicine: in the lexicography of Native American ceremony, power.

medicus: a healer or physician.

menstruum: that portion of a gestating tincture comprising the liquid solvent, in which herbs release their virtues. The most common menstruum is ethanol, but glycerin, vinegar, and various oils may be used, depending on the herb.

mithridate: a universal specific against poisons.

mycology: the science of fungi.

narcotic: a sleep-inducing agent, usually toxic and stupefying in large doses.

Natural Magic: that branch of the Magical Art allied to both science and sorcery, which acknowledges deific and spirituous forces at work within Nature, but as a lawful part of Creation.

nervine: an agent strengthening to the nerves or nervous system.

noxious spirit: an intrusive, uninvited, malevolent or otherwise repugnant spirituous entity. In Christian epistemology the term *demon* is often used, but this is a corruption of the noble Greek *daimon*, a governing intelligence.

oleum: oil.

olibanum: A confusing term in the magical literature of late antiquity, Gum Olibanum often refers to Frankincense (*Boswellia carteri*). Yet it also refers to resins or oils extracted from other Boswellia species, notably *Boswellia serrata*. It is sometimes, but not always, cognate with *Liban* and *Luban*, though these terms may sometimes refer to resinous gum incense in general.

patua: in Candomblé, a charm consisting of a bag containing portions of magical plant allies; usually worn on the person.

philter: originally, a love potion prepared to induce the lust or amorous desire of a specific person, or to usurp their volition.

pseudofruit: in botany, a fruit whose composition arises partially from tissue other than the ovary. Also *pseudocarp*.

pulmonarium: the respiratory center of the body, primarily the lungs.

pulse: cultivated edible species of the plant family Fabaceæ, including peas, broad beans, vetches, chickpeas, and lentils. Often classified by anthropologists or ethnobotanists as a grain.

pyrolysis: destructive distillation of wood, for the extraction of tars such as cade.

revulsive: a medicinal agent intended to withdraw blood from a gross pathological process or physiological morbidity.

rhizome: a type of modified underground stem, known for lateral or horizontal growth, containing both growing tips and roots; examples of such structures occur, for example, with Ginger, Galangal, Iris, and Turmeric.

riparian: appertaining river corridors and their allied ecological habitats.

rubefacient: an agent which produces inflammation and redness of the skin.

sialogogue: a medicament producing increased flow of saliva.

simpler: an herbalist who grows and gathers plants, and makes them into medicine.

spagyria: a branch of Alchemy focused on the precise separation and recombination of plant portions for elevating medicinal and spiritual power.

specularius: a diviner who employs a speculum or mirror.

speculum: a reflective surface such as a basins, mirrors, crystal, or pool of liquid, used for divination by gazing.

spirit-retinue: a constellated group of virtues, powers or characteristics which may act as a group, singly, or in specified combinations.

spiritus familiaris: a familiar spirit.

stipe: in mycology, the 'stem' of a mushroom.

stang: a forked staff used in sorcery.

sternutory: an agent which causes sneezing.

stomachic: an agent which is strengthening to the stomach.

strewing: the ancient practice of cleansing and consecration of hallowed space by casting fresh aromatic herbs on the floor or ground prior to ritually treading it.

stypic: an agent which arrests bleeding.

sway: a magic wand or stave, particularly in East Anglian traditions.

theriac: in medicine, an herb which is considered and antidote to poisons and venoms, or clears the same from the system.

thixotropic: the quality of having a viscous attribute when static, and fluid attributes when agitated.

tincture: a liquid extract of a plant, animal, or mineral, usually in alcohol.

tisane: a decoction.

tonic: an agent which gradually strengthens a bodily system over time with repeated use.

unguent: a fat-soluble medical or magical preparation in oil or other lipidic substance, usually employed by anointing the skin.

veneficium: in former times, the art and crime of poisoning, particularly in Europe, and often aligned with sorcery.

venificus: a sorcerer specializing in poisons.

vermifuge: that which expels and destroys worms.

vesicant: an agent that irritates the skin or raises a blister.

vinum essatum: wine infused with the virtues of diverse plants.

virtue: a power, principle or other essence of a plant spirit.

withe: A green sapling used for a wand, often of willow.

wort: a plant, particularly a non-arboreal medicinal plant. Alternatively, *wort* may refer to the bubbling brew of malt, water, hops, and other herbs that, after being cooled and fermented, becomes beer.

xerophyte: a plant which thrives in arid environments.

yarb doctor: in the Ozark and Appalachian magical traditions of North America, a practitioner of herbal magic.

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D.A.S.

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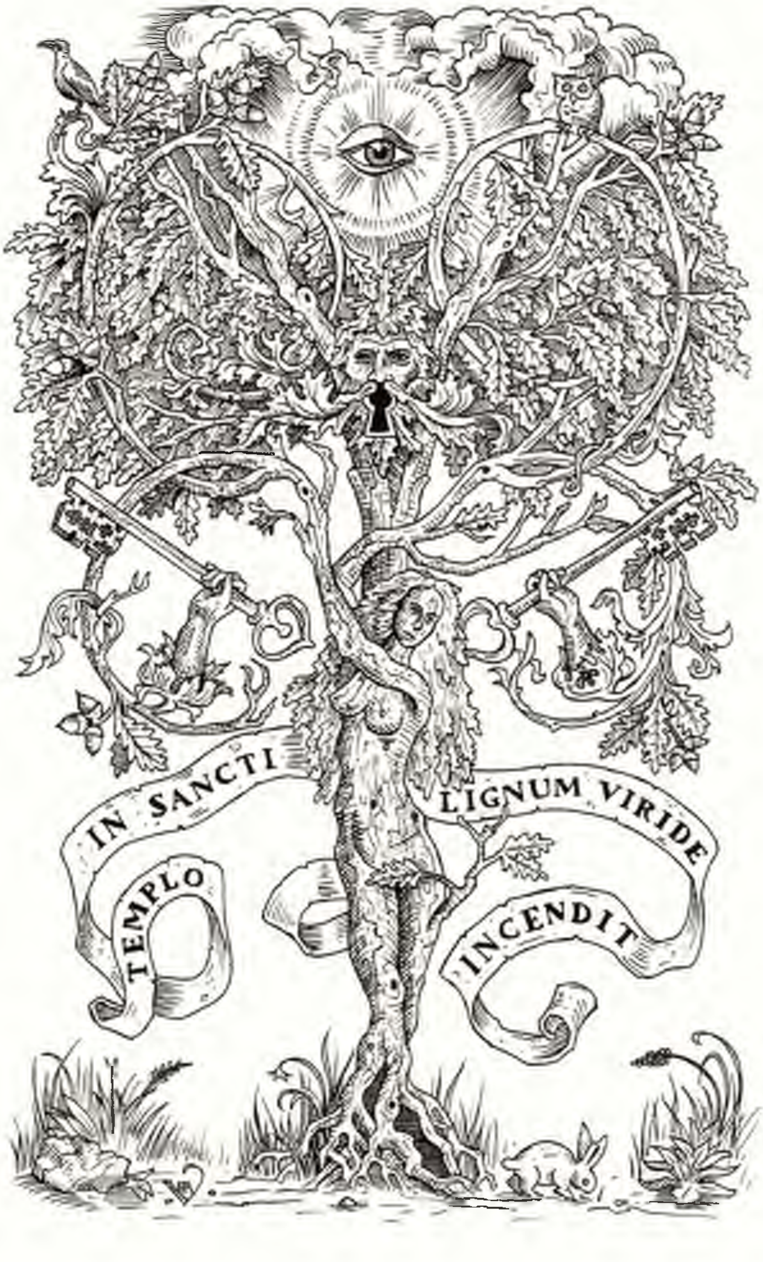
IN SANCTI
LIGNUM VIRIDE
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ARTIST DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my father, James G. Vierling, who taught me to listen to the trees.

B.A.V.

*

This first edition of *The Green Mysteries* is comprised
of: 2,335 paperbound copies; 1,500 standard hardcover
copies bound in green cloth with
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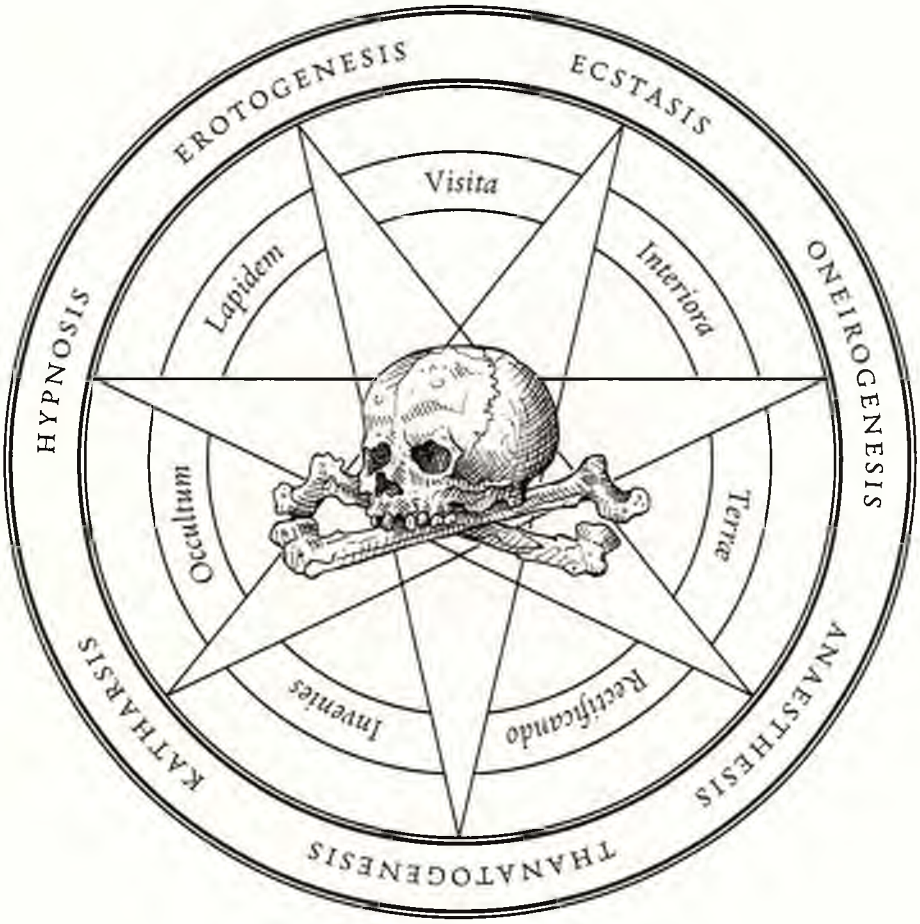
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The Green Mysteries is a complete lexicon of the spiritual, magical and occult properties of plants. Containing more than 400 individual entries, this occult herbal focuses especially upon plant power as an emanation of spirit, and how herbs are utilized in the active practices of magic and ritual. It includes trees and herbs from the Americas as well as native European plants familiar to students of the Western Esoteric Tradition.

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* * *

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Daniel A. Schulke is an author and herbalist living in Northern California. His previously published works include *Veneficium* and *Thirteen Pathways of Occult Herbalism.*

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Benjamin A. Vierling is a Californian painter and illustrator working in traditional media. His work for Three Hands Press includes original images for *Veneficium* and Richard Gavin's *The Moribund Portal.*

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